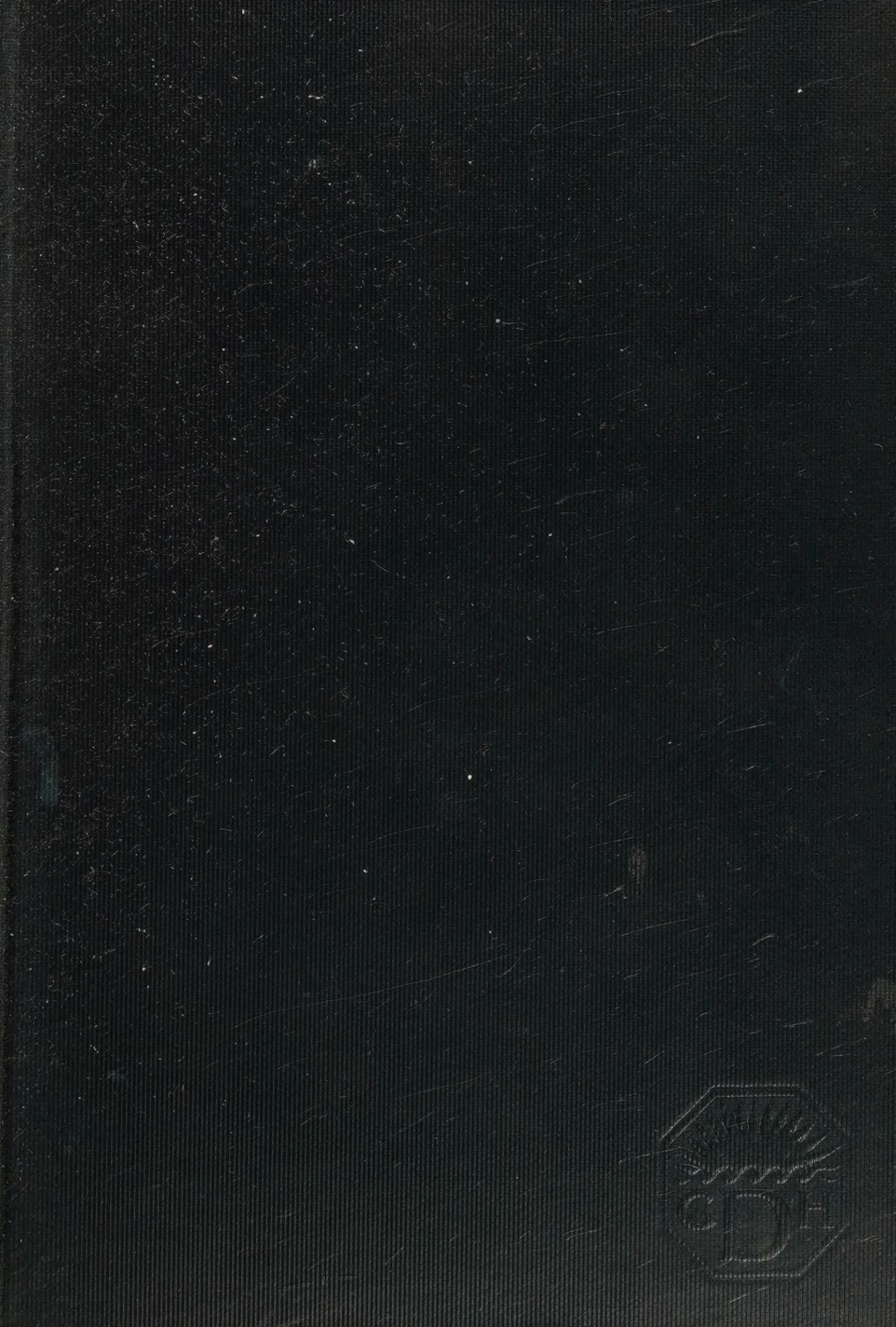

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THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE

R. A. TORREY

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THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE

BY

R. A. TORREY

DEAN, BIBLE INSTITUTE, LOS ANGELES

Author "The God of the Bible," "Is the Bible the Inerrant Word of God?", "The Importance and Value of Proper Bible Study," "The Real Christ," "What the Bible Teaches," "How to Work for Christ," etc.

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THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE
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INTRODUCTION

Real Christianity centers in a person, Jesus the Christ, the actual Jesus of history, Jesus of the New Testament. Jesus Himself is the sum of everything that has any right to call itself *Christianity*. How important it is then both to our thinking and to our everyday living that we know as fully and as exactly as we can The Christ of the Bible, Jesus the Christ.

Furthermore, there can be no true knowledge of the One True God without knowing Jesus, the true Christ. This He Himself very clearly taught when He said in His prayer the night before His crucifixion: "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, *and Him whom Thou didst send, even JESUS CHRIST.*"

So the subject of this book is The Christ of the Bible. It is the logical and necessary sequel of my book of last year, The God of the Bible. The Christ of the Bible is the only Real Christ. All other Christs than the Christ of the Bible are false Christs: they are anti-Christs. They mislead and destroy all who believe in and follow them.

There can be no question on the part of any one who has any considerable knowledge of the Christ set forth in God's one and only book, the Bible, that there is a very wide and very radical difference between the Christ that the Bible so clearly and so fully describes

and the Christ of many modern poets and romancers and philosophers, and also the Christ of the rapidly increasing cults, and even the Christ of many supposedly evangelical preachers and theologians. The object of this book is to discover and understand as fully as we may the true Christ, the Christ of the Bible, that we may believe in and love and obey and follow and worship Him.

The chapters of this book were originally given as sermons to the author's own congregation in Los Angeles, and broadcasted over the radio so that they were heard as far away as Vancouver and Central America and Honolulu. The immediate congregation before the writer was composed not only of men and women of all classes, but also of children of all ages; and many of these children testified that they understood and enjoyed all that was said and profited by it. What a suggestive illustration this is of the fact that needs to be deeply impressed on the modern mind, that in order to draw and hold large crowds it is not necessary to be superficial or to indulge largely in humor or pathetic anecdotes. One can interest the crowd in the profoundest truths if he can talk plain English in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The language of the original sermons has been recast in a few sentences to make them more readable as chapters of a book and not too sermonic in form.

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THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE

THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE

CHAPTER I

THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE: IS THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE GOD?

The subject that we are about to investigate and upon which we are to reflect is, The Christ of the Bible: the Christ of the Bible as distinguished from many of the popular representations of the Christ in our present day, and as distinguished from many of the representations of the Christ in our pulpits, and by not a few of our professors in the theological classes in our universities and in our theological seminaries.

It cannot be denied by any one who has any large knowledge of the teaching of God's Word regarding the Christ whom God has anointed and sent into the world, and who is coming back some day to take the reins of government out of the hands of emperors and kings and presidents and soviets, and all other rulers, that the Christ set before us so clearly in the Word of God, the true Christ, the only real Christ, God's own Christ, Christ Jesus, is far different from the Christ of many of our modern romancers and

poets, and sociologists and moralists and popular preachers, and even of many of our theologians, theologians sometimes in supposedly orthodox seminaries.

We are to study the actual Christ of this Book, not the Christ that we would like to have or love to dream of, but *the Christ that really* IS. The Bible is one of the easiest books in the world to understand if men really wish to understand it and to find out what it actually teaches, and do not wish to read into it their own notions and speculations. It is sometimes said that "you can make the Bible mean almost anything." Yes, you can, but the question is not what you can make it mean, but what God intended it to mean, and that is easy enough to find out provided you wish to find out and will get right down to hard, honest, earnest investigation. That is exactly what we shall endeavor to do under the illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit Himself, the real author of the book, Whose guidance God has promised to all those whose wills and minds are fully surrendered to him to discover and do His will. (Jno. 7:17; Acts 5:32; Jno. 14:15-26; 16:7-13.)

The particular subject of this chapter is: "The Christ of the Bible: Is He God?"

This question about Christ, Is He God, is the most fundamental of all questions concerning Christ. If two persons are agreed about Christ at this point, agreed that He really is God, they can have fellowship together, though they may differ widely from one another upon many questions of quite secondary importance; e.g., the question, "When Christ is Coming Back to the Earth to Reign," and the minute de-

tails regarding His return. But if two really intelligent and earnest-minded persons are disagreed upon this point, if one believes that Christ is God and the other is equally confident that He is not God, how can there by any possibility be any true fellowship either in worship, in prayer or in anything that can properly be called *"Christian* work"? For if the one who denies that Christ is God is right, then the one who believes that He is and worships Him as such, is an idolator. And on the other hand, if the one who believes that Christ is God, is right, the one who denies that He is God is a blasphemer and is robbing God of the Faith and Honor and Worship which are His due.

"Is the Christ of the Bible, Jesus Christ, God?" This question is answered in the most unmistakable terms in the Bible.

I. ALL THE DISTINCTIVE ATTRIBUTES OF DEITY ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM IN THE BIBLE.

In the first place, *We note that all the distinctive attributes of Deity are ascribed to Jesus, the Christ, in the Bible.* What are the distinctive attributes of Deity; that is to say, what are the attributes God possesses and no one but God possesses? Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Eternity, Immutability. Now all these distinctively divine attributes are ascribed to Jesus Christ in the Bible. It would take many pages to give all the passages with any fullness, but I can give you enough in a few pages to abundantly prove the point.

1. First of all, *Omnipotence is ascribed to Jesus Christ.*

Read Eph. 1:20-23:

> "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and *he put all things in subjection under his feet,* and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

We are here told that Christ is now far above all principalities, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come—and *that all things are in subjection under His feet.* Even all the hierarchies of the angelic world are under Him. In these words we have the plainest possible declaration of omnipotence. In other passages which I will not take time to quote, we are told that Jesus, even during His earthly life, had power over disease, that it was subject to His word; that He had power over death, that it was subject to His word; that He had power over the winds and the sea, that they were subject to His word; that He had power over demons, that they were subject to His word—and in the passage just quoted from the Epistle to the Ephesians we are told that *He had power over all things,* that *"all things" were put "in subjection under His feet."*

Now read Heb. 1:3:

> "Who being the effulgence of his (God's) glory, and the very image of his substance, and *upholding all things by the word of his power,* when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Here we are told that the Son of God, the Christ of God, *upholds all things by the Word of His power.* So we can say without the slightest hesitation that *Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, is Omnipotent.*

2. In the second place, *The Christ of the Bible is Omniscient.* There are again a multitude of passages clearly showing this, but we will look at only three.

(1) Look first at Jno. 2:24, 25:

> "But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that *he knew all men,* and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for *he himself knew what was in man."*

Here we are told that Jesus *knew all men,* and in various passages in the Gospels, we are told that Jesus, even during His earthly life, knew the secret thoughts of men. Now in II Chron. 6:30 we read:

> "Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and render unto every man according to all his ways, whose heart thou knowest (for thou, *even thou only, knowest the hearts of the children of men*).

Here we are distinctly told that there is only One Being in the universe who knows the hearts of the children of men, and that is God—but we are just as distinctly told in the passage that we have just read

in the Gospel of John, that Jesus knows the hearts of all men. So the inference is inescapable, that Jesus, the Christ of God, was Himself God.

(2) Now look at Jno. 16:30:

"Now know we that *thou knowest all things,* and needest not that any man should ask thee:"

Here is a distinct declaration that Jesus' disciples made and that Jesus Himself accepted as true, that *our Lord Jesus knows all things*—that *He is Omniscient.*

(3) Look at just one more passage on this point. Col. 2:2, 3:

"Even Christ, *in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* hidden."

Here is the definite and distinct declaration that "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" are hidden in Jesus Christ.

3. In the third place, *We are also told that the Christ is Omnipresent.* This we are told again and again, but we will consider only four passages.

(1) Look first at Matt. 18:19, 20.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, *there am I* in the midst of them."

Here the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said that *in every place where two or three are gathered together in His name, there He is,* and as two or three are gathered together everywhere over the earth in His name at the same time, He must be at the same time in all these different places.

(2) Now read Matt. 28:19, 20:

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Fa-

ther and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, *I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*"

Here Jesus promises His disciples who go out to do His bidding and make disciples of all the nations, that wherever they go, He is with every one of them —and since they go into all the world, He must be present at the same time in every part of the world.

(3) Now read a most remarkable passage—Jno. 3:13:

"And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven."

Here the Lord Jesus Christ declares that He was still in heaven while He was on earth. The reading in this passage is doubtful; that is to say, that it is not found in some manuscripts, but it is found in the Alexandrian MS. and in almost all the early versions, which were made before any of the MSS. now extant were written. This reading is accepted by most of the best editors of the Greek text; for example, by Tischendorf and Tregelles. It is, however, rejected by Westcott and Hort, but the weight of evidence for it is very great. But we can easily spare it, for essentially the same truth is so clearly set forth in so many other passages in the Scripture.

(4) Just one more passage on this point of the Omnipresence of the Christ of the Bible. Read Eph. 1:23:

"The church, which is his (Christ's) body, the fulness of *him that filleth all in all.*"

Here is the plain, uncompromising declaration that *Jesus Christ filleth all in all.* It is evident then that *there can be no reasonable question that the Christ of the Bible is Omnipresent.*

4. In the fourth place, *The Christ of the Bible is also Eternal as well as Omnipresent.* Take only three of the many passages that might be cited.

(1) Read first Jno. 1:1:

> "In the beginning *was* the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Here we are told that the Word, the Person known as "the Word of God," Who became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God (Jno. 1:14), *in the beginning already was.* There could not by any possibility be any plainer declaration of His Eternity.

(2) Now turn to the Old Testament. Micah 5:2:

> "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathan, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.*"

Here we are told that the Christ who was prophesied in the Old Testament was to be a being who had existed from all Eternity. This passage is all the more notable because it is from the Old Testament; and as we go on we shall see again and again that the predicted Christ of the Old Testament, as well as the historic Christ of the New Testament, is a Divine person.

(3) Now turn to our Lord's own words, in Jno. 17:5:

> "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine

own self *with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*"

Here our Lord Jesus distinctly claims for Himself that He had existed from before the foundation of the material universe and had existed in Divine glory.

It is clear, from these passages, as well as from many others which we need not stop to quote, that *the Christ of the Bible is an Eternal Being* and that *He did not begin to be* when He became incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

5. The fifth and only remaining distinctive and incommunicable attribute of Deity is *Immutability,* and this *also is ascribed to Jesus Christ.*

Turn to Heb. 13:8:

"Jesus Christ *is the same* yesterday and to-day, yea and *forever.*"

Here is the plainest possible assertion of the Eternal Immutability of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We see then that ALL THE DISTINCTIVE ATTRIBUTES OF DEITY, ALL THE ATTRIBUTES THAT GOD POSSESSES, AND GOD ALONE POSSESSES, ARE ASCRIBED TO JESUS CHRIST IN THE BIBLE. In addition to all this, we are told in Col. 2:9 that—

"In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

II. SIXTEEN DIVINE NAMES AND TITLES.

In the second place, not only are all the distinctively Divine attributes ascribed to Jesus Christ, but furthermore, *At least sixteen names or titles, that clearly*

imply Deity are used in speaking of Jesus Christ in the Bible and some of them are used over and over again. The total number of passages reaches far into the hundreds.

Of course, it is impossible for us in the time at our disposal to cite all these names and titles. If you wish to study the matter, you will find them in my book, "What the Bible Teaches." But let me give you three which, even if they stood alone, would be quite sufficient to prove our point.

1. Turn to I Cor. 2:8:

> "Which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified *the Lord of Glory.*"

Here our Lord Jesus is called *the Lord of Glory.* Is that a Divine title? The Bible itself answers the question—read Psa. 24:8-10:

> *"Who is the King of glory?*
> Jehovah strong and mighty,
> Jehovah mighty in battle.
> Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
> Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors:
> And the King of glory will come in.
> Who is this King of glory?
> *Jehovah of hosts,*
> He *is the King of glory.*"

We are here told that it is Jehovah of hosts Who is the King of glory and He alone, but in the New Testament Paul unhesitatingly speaks of Christ Jesus as "the Lord of glory."

2. Now read Isa. 9:6:

> "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is

given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, *Mighty God, Everlasting Father,* Prince of Peace."

There are really three unmistakably Divine names in this passage. I could show you, if there were time, that the name "Wonderful" is a Divine name. But take two Divine names in the passage about which there can be no question: "Mighty God"—"Everlasting Father." These are beyond any honest question, unmistakably Divine names, names that could only be applied to a Divine person and they are here applied, in this Old Testament prophecy, to the coming Messiah, or Christ. Leeser, the wily Jew, has tried to avoid the force of this passage by putting words into his English translation of this passage for which there are no equivalents whatever in the Hebrew text and which grossly violate the context. The comparatively recently published authoritative Jewish-English Old Testament tries to avoid the force of the Hebrew words found in this verse by simply transliterating the Hebrew words instead of translating them, but no Hebrew scholar can honestly look at the Hebrew text and not admit that three unmistakably Divine names are here applied to the Christ.

3. Now read the angelic proclamation of the king who was to be born of the Virgin. You will find it in Matt. 1:23:

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son,

And they shall call his name *Immanuel;*

which is, being interpreted, *God with us.*"

There can be no mistaking the fact that the angel who announced the birth of the coming Messiah gave to Him an unmistakably Divine name, "God with us."

4. Now turn to Rom. 9:5:

> "Whose are the fathers, and of whom is *Christ* as concerning the flesh, *Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.*"

Here the Holy Spirit, speaking through the Apostle Paul, *distinctly declares that the Christ is "God blessed forever."* The Unitarians have wrestled often and hard with this statement of Paul's, and various interpretations have been suggested that would eliminate the plain declaration that Christ is "God blessed forever," but these interpretations are not candid nor straight nor reasonable, and they will not bear honest and unprejudiced examination.

5. Read one other passage—in some ways the most significant of all the passages—Jno. 20:28, 29:

> "Thomas answered and said unto him, *My Lord and my God.* Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and *yet have believed.*"

Here again the Unitarians have wrestled hard to read out of these utterances of Thomas and of our Lord Jesus all that God has put into them. They say that Thomas was excited and indulged in profanity. If that is so, our Lord Jesus not only let his profanity go unreproved but praised him for it, which is inconceivable on the part of any one who has any respect for Christ as a reasonably intelligent and good man.

Furthermore, Thomas not only offered this ascrip-

tion of Deity and this worship to Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ accepted it; and you cannot discredit or disallow it without impugning the moral character or sanity of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The Christ of the Bible was either "Lord and God," or else He was a blasphemous impostor, or a pitiable lunatic. Take your choice—I have no difficulty in making mine.

III. ALL THE DISTINCTIVELY DIVINE OFFICES ARE PREDICATED OF JESUS CHRIST.

In the third place, *All the distinctively Divine offices, that is all the offices that God can perform and no one but God can perform, are ascribed to the Christ of the Bible.* What are the distinctively Divine offices (that is, the offices that God can perform and God alone can perform)? Creation, Preservation in existence of created things, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Raising of the Dead, the Transformation of our Bodies, the Bestowal of Eternal Life and Judgment. All these distinctively Divine offices are predicated of Jesus Christ in the Bible. We will take them up in the order given.

1. First, *Creation.* Turn to Heb. 1:10:

"And,

Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth,

And the heavens are the works of thy hands:"

The Lord in this passage, as is unquestionably clear from the context, is the Lord Jesus, and we are here distinctly told that the Lord Jesus was the one who

laid the foundation of the earth, and that the heavens are the work of His hands. *The Christ of the Bible, Christ Jesus, is Creator.* The one who is our Saviour is the one who also created the material universe.

2. Second, *Preservation.* Turn to the 3rd verse of this same chapter: Heb. 1:3:

> "Who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and *upholding all things by the word of his power,* when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"

Here we are told that the Son of God, the Christ, upholds all created things by the Word of His own power. THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE IS THE PRESERVER OF ALL CREATED THINGS. I do rejoice that it is the one who upholds all things by the Word of His power who is also my Saviour, Jesus Christ.

3. Turn now to Mark 2:5-11.

> "And Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, *thy sins are forgiven.* But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: *who can forgive sins but one, even God?* And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to

the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house."

Here Jesus Himself declares that He has authority on earth to forgive sins. They called Him a blasphemer for claiming this, and if He were not Divine in a sense that no other man nor angel was Divine, He was a blasphemer in claiming this; you cannot save His moral character and deny His Deity. But if Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, is God, then it is the Unitarian and the New Theology man, and all who deny His distinctive and full Deity and who make Him out to be Divine only in the sense that we are all Divine, who are the outrageous blasphemers.

In the passage in Luke 7:40-47 Jesus distinctly taught that all sin was against Himself, which is an unmistakable claim of Deity. Read the passage carefully and ponder it deeply.

4. Turn now to Jno. 6:39, 40:

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should *raise it up at the last day.* For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life, and *I will raise him up at the last day.*" (Read also v. 44.)

Here we are told by Jesus Christ Himself, that it is He Himself Who in the great coming day will raise the dead. Who then is He? There can be but one answer—*He is God.*

5. Turn now to Phil. 3:20, 21:

"For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

who shall fashion anew *the body of our humiliation,* that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working *whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself."*

Here we are told that *our Lord Jesus Christ,* when He comes again, *shall fashion anew these bodies of ours which are raised from the dead, into the likeness of His own glorious body.* This, of course, is unquestionably a Divine work; and furthermore, we are told in this passage that *"He is able* even *to subject all things unto himself,"* the plainest possible declaration of absolute Omnipotence, which, of course, God alone possesses.

6. Now read II Tim. 4:1:

"I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, *who shall judge the living and the dead."*

Here it is distinctly taught *that Christ Jesus shall judge the living and the dead.*

In Jno. 5:22, 23 Jesus Christ Himself emphasized the Divine character of this office of judgment, which the Father had committed to Him. Here are His words:

"For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son; *that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."*

We will have occasion to refer to this passage again, but just note at this time that Jesus, the Christ of God, Himself taught that all men should pay the same Divine honor to Him that they did to God the Father.

7. Now read Jno. 10:28:

"*And I give unto them eternal life;* and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Place alongside of this Jno. 17:1, 2.

"These things spake Jesus; and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee: even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given him, *he* should *give eternal life.*"

In both of these passages Jesus Christ Himself declares that He is the giver of eternal life. This is also, beyond the possibility of question, a Divine office.

To sum up what we have said under this head, *Seven Distinctively Divine Offices are Predicated of Jesus Christ.*

IV. STATEMENTS WHICH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE MADE DISTINCTLY OF JEHOVAH, GOD, TAKEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TO REFER TO JESUS CHRIST.

In the fourth place, *Statements which in the Old Testament are made of Jehovah, God, are taken in the New Testament to refer to Jesus Christ.* There are many instances of this, but we shall consider only two illustrations.

1. Read Heb. 1:10-12:

"And,

Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth,

And the heavens are the works of thy hands:
They shall perish; but thou continuest:
And they all shall wax old as doth a garment;
And as a mantle shalt thou roll them up,
As a garment, and they shall be changed:
But thou art the same,
And thy years shall not fail."

Now these words are here unhesitatingly applied to the Lord Jesus, but if you will turn to the Old Testament passage which is quoted, Ps. 102: 24-27, the person who is there named as the subject of this ascription of praise given in the passage is God. The Psalmist says:

"I said, *O my God,* take me not away in the midst of my days:
Thy years are throughout all generations.
Of old *didst thou* lay the foundation of the earth;
And the heavens are the work of *thy* hands."

And the other words quoted in Heb. 1: 10-12 follow. So it is clear that a passage which distinctly names God as its subject in the Old Testament is taken to refer to the Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament; that is to say, in New Testament thought and doctrine Jesus, the Christ of God, occupies the place that Jehovah occupies in Old Testament thought and doctrine.

2. Take another illustration of this. Read Isa. 8: 13:

"*Jehovah of hosts,* him shall ye sanctify; and let *him* be your fear, and let him be your dread."

Here the Prophet Isaiah specifies Jehovah as the

one who is to be their fear and their dread, and distinctly declares that He is the one whom they are to sanctify. But now turn to 1 Peter 3:14, 15:

> "But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; *but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord:*"

Here it is Christ who is to be sanctified as Lord in the heart. Here again it is perfectly clear that *in New Testament thought and doctrine Jesus Christ occupies the place that Jehovah occupies in Old Testament thought and doctrine.*

V. THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST IS COUPLED WITH THAT OF GOD, THE FATHER, IN A WAY THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO COUPLE THAT OF ANY FINITE BEING WITH THAT OF THE DEITY.

In the fifth place, *The name and person of our Lord Jesus Christ is constantly coupled in the Bible with the name and person of the Eternal God, the Father, in a way that would be impossible for any intelligent and reverent mind to couple the name and person of any finite being with that of the Deity.* I will give you but three illustrations among the many that might be cited, and all of these are taken from the words of Jesus Christ, Himself.

1. First, John 14:23:

> "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

Here the Lord Jesus Himself unhesitatingly speaks of God and Himself as "we"; that is, "God and I." If Jesus were not a Divine person, could anything surpass the audacious blasphemy of this?

2. Now turn to the 17th chapter of John, the 3rd verse:

> "And this is life eternal, *that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ.*"

Here our Lord Jesus does not hesitate to couple Himself with God the Father, and declare that *the knowledge of Himself* is as essential a part of "life eternal" as the knowledge of God the Father. If Jesus Christ were not Himself Divine, this is most appalling blasphemy.

3. Now listen to the most amazing utterance of all: Jno. 14:1: (I give the American Revision, which is more exact than the Authorized Version, though the thought that I am after is in the Authorized Version as truly as it is in the Revised Version.)

> "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, *believe also in me.*"

Here Jesus Christ demands that His disciples put exactly the same absolute faith in Him that they put in God the Father. Who then is He? Surely, He must be equal with God the Father, or else an appalling impostor and blasphemer, or else a pitiable lunatic. Which is He? Which is He? Thank God, I know He is "my Lord and my God"! Remember also that when Jesus unhesitatingly commanded His disciples to believe in Him with the same absolute faith with which they believed in God the Father,

He did it in full recognition of the fact that God the Father Himself had said in Jeremiah, the Prophet, Jer. 17:5, 7:

> "Thus saith Jehovah: *Cursed* is the man *that trusteth in man,* and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from Jehovah. . . . *Blessed is the man that trusteth in Jehovah,* and whose trust Jehovah is."

If, then, Jesus was not Jehovah manifested in the flesh, "very God of very God," He demanded that the disciples should do that which would bring the curse of God upon their heads; but if he was Jehovah, then He simply commanded them to do that which would bring the blessing of Jehovah upon their heads.

Remember also that this amazing and overwhelming word of Christ Jesus, this daring claim of full equality with God the Father, is made in what most people regard as the most precious of all the precious chapters in the Bible, and you cannot give up your belief in the full Deity of Jesus Christ without giving up, not merely some unessential parts of the Bible, but you must give up the most precious chapter in the whole book, Jno. 14.

VI. JESUS CHRIST MUST BE WORSHIPED BY ANGELS AND MEN.

Just one more unanswerable line of proof that the Christ of the Bible is God. *It is declared over and over again in the Bible that the Christ of the Bible, Christ Jesus, is a person to be worshiped.* A few of the many passages that might be cited will suffice for our present purpose.

1. We are told in the Gospels that *Jesus Christ was worshiped when on earth.* Turn, for example, to Matt. 14:33:

> "And they that were in the boat *worshiped him,* saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

Some commentators, and even the margin of the "American Standard Version," seem to try to get around the force of this statement by saying (to quote the margin of the "American Standard Version"): "The Greek word denotes an act of reverence *whether paid to a creature or to the Creator.*" Now this statement is technically true, but it is altogether misleading. It *is* used of worship paid to man and to creatures *by idolaters,* but it is not used in that way by worshipers of the true God. Indeed, Jesus Himself says, speaking in Matt. 4:9, 10:

> "And he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only* shalt thou serve."

And Jesus here uses exactly the same Greek word that we are told in the margin of "the American Standard Version," "denotes an act of reverence whether paid to the creature or to the Creator." So *Jesus says that the act described by this word should not be paid to anybody but to God only, and yet He permitted it to be paid to Himself.* Strangely enough, the American Standard Version, in the margin of Matt. 4:9, 10, where Satan uses the word "worship," has the same marginal note that it has elsewhere (that is to say, that the word Satan uses "denotes an

act of reverence whether paid to the creature, or to the Creator"), but when the Lord Jesus uses it and strictly forbids such worship to be paid to the creature, they neglect to insert this marginal note. Were they asleep, or were they unwilling to hurt the feelings of some one who did not wish to believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus? Why not be consistent and fair at any cost? It is amazing what fools real scholars can sometimes make of themselves when they attempt to be overwise or overgenerous to the enemy.

2. Now read Jno. 5:22, 23:

> "For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son; *that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.*"

These are the Christ's own words and He here says that, *It is God, the Father's will that all men pay the same Divine honor to Him, the Son, as to Himself.*

3. Now turn to Heb. 1:6:

> "And when he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world he saith, And *let all the angels of God worship him.*"

Here we are told that, *The Son of God, the Christ of God, is to be worshiped as God by all the angels as well as by men.* Could anything be plainer than this?

Some years ago in the after-meeting in our church in Chicago, I stepped up to an intelligent looking young man at the back part of the room, and said, "Are you a Christian?" He replied, "I am not what I suppose you would call a Christian." I said, "What kind of a Christian are you?" He replied, "I am a

Unitarian," and named the church in Boston to which he belonged. I said to him, "Then, you do not believe that Jesus Christ should be worshiped?" He said, "That is exactly what I believe, and my Pastor (and he named the pastor, a prominent Unitarian minister in Boston) has told me that there is no place in the Bible where we are told to worship Jesus Christ." I said, "Let me read you a passage," and I opened my Bible and read Heb. 1:6:

> "And when he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world he saith, And *let all the angels of God worship him.*"

He said, "Does it say that?" I said, "Take it and read it for yourself." He took it and read. "Well," he said, "my pastor told me there was no passage in the Bible where we are told to worship Jesus Christ." And I said, "Does that passage tell you that Jesus Christ should be worshiped?" He replied, "Well, it certainly does." There is no room for a moment's doubt of that.

4. Now, last of all, read Phil. 2:9-11:

> "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that *at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,* of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that *every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,* to the glory of God the Father."

This passage becomes all the more notable when we learn that it is, for the most part, a quotation from the Old Testament—Isa. 45:21-23. And in that passage it is Jehovah who declares that to Him "every

knee shall bow" and "every tongue shall sware." He says it directly after having said:

> "*I, Jehovah?* and *there is no God else besides me,* a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me. . . . *Unto me* every knee shall bow, every tongue shall sware."

To sum up all that we have said: By the ascription of all of the distinctively divine attributes, by the use of many distinctively divine names, by the predication of all the distinctively divine offices, by referring statements which in the Old Testament distinctly name Jehovah, God, as their subject, to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, by coupling the name and person of Jesus Christ with that of God the Father, in a way in which it would be impossible for an intelligent and reverent mind to couple those of any finite being with those of the Deity, and by the clear teaching that Jesus Christ should be worshiped even as God, the Father, is worshiped—in all these unmistakable ways, God in His Word distinctly proclaims that the Christ, the only true Christ, Christ Jesus, is a Divine Being, is God.

Bear in mind also that the Christ of the Old Testament prophecy is as clearly and truly God as the Christ of New Testament history.

Whoever then refuses to accept Jesus Christ as His Divine Saviour and Lord, is guilty of the enormous sin, the appalling sin, of rejecting God. Many a man thinks he is good because he never stole anything, or never murdered any one, or never cheated—"Of what great sin am I guilty?" he complacently asks. I reply, "You are guilty of the awful sin, the damning sin of

rejecting God." But suppose one questions or denies the Deity of Jesus Christ? That does not change the fact. No, not one particle. Nor does it lessen one particle of his guilt. Questioning or denying a fact never alters the fact. Suppose one should deny the goodness of a man, who, in actual fact, was the very soul of honor. It would not alter the fact that the man was the very soul of honor. It would simply make the questioner guilty of disgraceful and outrageous slander. So denying the fact of the Deity of Jesus, the Christ, does not make His Deity any less a fact, but it does make the one denying that Deity guilty of awful, blasphemous slander.

No imaginable sin that any one can commit against any human being can by any possibility be so great, so outrageous, and so damning as that of trying to rob this undeniably Divine and Infinite Person, Jesus Christ, of the absolute faith and whole-hearted worship which are His rightful due.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE: GOD, THE FATHER, IS GREATER THAN HIS SON, JESUS, WHO IS THE CHRIST OF GOD

We saw in our first chapter that the Christ of the Bible, the Christ of Old Testament prophecy as well as the Christ of New Testament history, the Christ of actual fact, as distinguished from the Christ Whom many men fancy and preach, Christ Jesus, was a Divine Person possessed of all the distinctive and incommunicable attributes of Deity, all the attributes that God possesses, and that God alone possesses. We saw that *Christ Jesus is our Lord and our God,* and is to be believed in and obeyed and honored and worshiped, just as we believe in and obey and honor and worship God the Father.

I. GOD, THE FATHER, GREATER THAN JESUS CHRIST, THE SON.

Now we shall look at the other side of the truth, a side that is clearly and frequently set forth in the Bible, namely, that *God, the Father, is greater than Christ Jesus, the Son of God.* So the subject of this chapter is, The Christ of the Bible: God the Father is greater than His Son Jesus, Who is the Christ of God. You will find our foundation text in the very plain and very explicit words of our Lord Jesus Himself, in Jno. 14:28:

> "Ye heard how I said to you, I go away, and I come unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would have rejoiced, because I go unto the Father: *for the Father is greater than I.*"

Let me tarry a moment to say that the truth usually has at least two sides, and not infrequently those two sides seem at first to be flatly contradictory to one another, and yet they are both true. One of the many glories of the Bible is that it presents clearly both sides of the truth, it teaches not only the truth but *the whole truth.* That is one place where it differs to some extent at least from all man-made philosophies and theologies. Most men see only one side of the truth, and no man attains perfectly to the Bible perfection of seeing all sides of the truth. So the Bible is always ahead of all of us, including the wisest and most far-seeing of us. This is peculiarly true when we come to that most profound and most unfathomable of all subjects, the one infinite subject, God Himself, His Person and Nature. On this infinite subject we shall continue to make new discoveries as long as we continue to live and think; but we shall never discover anything that God has not already revealed in the Bible, only we have not seen it as yet. This is, of course, demonstrative proof that the Bible has God Himself and not man for its real Author.

Many see the great foundation truth about Christ that Jesus Christ, the Christ of the Bible, the only true Christ, is equal to the Father in His nature, in the perfection of His attributes, in His honor, and in His glory: and then some day they suddenly run upon a passage like that which we are now studying, and

they are greatly puzzled, bewildered, dumbfounded, all at sea. "What!" they exclaim, "I thought Jesus Christ was God. I worshiped Him as my Lord and my God, and here He Himself says, 'My Father *is greater than I.*' Am I all wrong?" No, you are quite right. *Jesus Christ is equal to the Father in His nature, in His attributes, in His honor and authority and glory, but He is subordinate to the Father in His position, and also in His work.* Do you ask me, "How can that be?" I reply that to my mind there is no difficulty here whatever, but even if I could not see the *How* of it, I would believe it because the Bible teaches it, and I have found conclusive proof that the Bible is the Word of God; and, furthermore, I believe many things of which I do not understand the How. Indeed, I understand the How of very few things I firmly believe. But what concerns me in every department of life and thought is the facts, and not the philosophy of the facts. I am glad that God made me a practical man and not a philosopher. I have indulged quite extensively in the study of philosophy, Greek philosophy, and German philosophy, and French, and Scotch, and English, and American philosophy. I have found great recreation in it, more even than I have found in reading Mark Twain or Dicken's Pickwick Papers, though I have read Pickwick Papers four or five times. I do not understand the philosophy of the radio. It is a great mystery to me how at this very moment, up in Oregon men and women can be picking my words out of the apparently silent air and hear me as clearly as you folks down there and up yonder in the gallery hear me, only a few feet or a

few hundred feet away, and how also, at the same time, they could, if they wished, shift their key a little ways and no longer hear me, but hear the music or whatever it may be that is going over "the Examiner" radio, at this same time. I do not understand it. I do not much care to. It seems quite incredible to me; nevertheless I know it is a fact, and I rejoice that we did not wait until we understood the philosophy of it before we put this blessed broadcasting outfit into our auditorium.

II. GOD THE FATHER BEGAT JESUS CHRIST THE SON.

To return to our subject: in the second place, *God The Father Begat Jesus Christ The Son.* This truth we find in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. To begin with the Old Testament, read Ps. 2:7:

> "I will tell of the decree:
> Jehovah said unto Me, Thou art My Son;
> *This day have I begotten Thee.*"

This declaration that the coming Christ should be the Son of God the Father, is quoted in the New Testament, in Heb. 1:1-5:

> "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, Whom He appointed Heir of all things, through Whom also He made

the worlds; Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very Image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become by so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time,

Thou art My Son,
This day have I begotten thee?

and again,

I will be to Him a Father,
And He shall be to Me a Son?"

The same important and fundamental truth is found in one of the best known verses in the Bible, Jno. 3 : 16:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave *His Only begotten Son,* that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

While we emphasize the truth that Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, the Only true Christ, is the Son of God, we should also emphasize the truth which the Bible emphasizes, that He is the SON of God. He is not the Father, He is the *Son;* and the Son is always subordinate to the Father. I have a son in China. He is a fine son. I suspect that he is not only equal to his father but much better than his father in many ways. Nevertheless, he is the son and I am the father, and he never forgets it, and he does not fret at all about it. And God the Father is *the Father;* and Jesus, the Christ, is *the Son;* and while Jesus Christ is equal to the Father in attributes, He is subordinate

to the Father in position, office and authority; and He rejoiced in the fact, and constantly emphasized that fact while He was here on earth among men.

The question may arise in some inquiring minds, Was Christ eternally the Son of God, or did He become the Son of God by becoming man and being born of the virgin? To this question the Bible answers in Jno. 1:1:

> "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

That is to say, it is as the Eternal Word that He is primarily set forth in His preëxistent glory and not as the Eternal Son. And in Jno. 1:14, we read:

> "And *the Word became flesh,* and dwelt among us (*and we beheld* His glory, glory *as of the Only begotten from the Father*), full of grace and truth."

That is to say, it is *when the Word became flesh* that we beheld His glory as *the Only begotten Son.* And in Ps. 2:7, we read:

> "I will tell of the decree:
> Jehovah said unto Me, Thou art My Son;
> *This day have I begotten Thee,"*

which plainly indicates a begetting and thus becoming the Son *in time.* And we are told in Luke 1:35:

> "And the angel answered and said unto her, (that is unto the Virgin Mary) The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the powers of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also *the holy thing which is begotten* shall be called *the Son of God,"*

which plainly tells us it was because He was conceived

by the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ was to "be called the Son of God."

But there is still another side to this truth also. This other side we read in Jno. 17:5:

> "And now, *Father,* glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self *with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was,"*

which clearly implies that the Christ was the Son of the Father in the Eternity before the world was. And in Jno. 3:16, we are told that:

> "God so loved the world, that *He gave His Only begotten Son,* that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Here the words "He gave His Only begotten Son" clearly imply that the One He sent into the world was already His Son. And in Jno. 17:24, we read:

> *"Father,* I desire that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given me: for *Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."*

These words seem to clearly set forth the love of the Eternal Father to *the Eternal Son* in the Eternity before the world was.

III. JESUS CHRIST LIVES BECAUSE OF HIS FATHER.

In the third place, *Jesus Christ lives because of the Father.* We read in John 6:57:

> "As the living Father sent me, and *I live because of the Father."*

While the Christ of the Bible is, as we saw last

Sunday, an Eternal Being, while He existed from all Eternity and will exist to all Eternity, His Eternal existence is *a derived existence,* eternally derived from the Father. Or, as His own words put it, He "lives *because of the Father.*"

IV. THE SON CAN DO NOTHING INDEPENDENTLY OF THE FATHER.

In the fourth place, *The Son can do nothing independently of the Father.* We read in John 5 : 19 :

> "Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, *The Son can do nothing of Himself,* but what He seeth the Father doing : for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner."

The Christ of the Bible, the Son of God, is omnipotent, as we saw last Sunday. He can do all things; but He can do nothing independently of the Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in that fact. He gloried in it and recurred to it in one form or another again and again.

V. JESUS CHRIST WAS SENT BY THE FATHER.

In the fifth place, *Jesus Christ was sent by the Father.* Jesus Christ came into this world upon a wondrous mission. He came gladly, difficult as the mission was and demanding such amazing sacrifice on His part as it did; nevertheless He did not come primarily of His own volition, another sent Him. God, the Father, sent Him, and He replied to the Father's

commission, as we read in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, Ps. 40:7, 8:

"Lo, I am come;
In the roll of the book it is written of Me:
I delight to do *Thy* will, O My God."

In the New Testament, it reads in this way, Heb. 10:5-7:

"Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith,
Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not,
But a body didst Thou prepare for Me;
In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hadst no pleasure:
Then said I, *Lo, I am come*
(In the roll of the book it is written of Me)
To do Thy will, O God."

I wish we might linger here a while, but we must pass on. But never forget that it was *"God* (the Father)," Who "so loved the world, that He gave His Only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

VI. JESUS CHRIST RECEIVED COMMANDMENT FROM THE FATHER.

In the sixth place, *Jesus Christ Received Commandment From The Father, i.e., He Was Under The Father's Authority And Direction.* Read Jno. 10:18:

"No one taketh it (that is My life), away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. *This commandment received I from My Father."*

While the laying down of His life was entirely voluntary on our Lord's part, while He joyfully "though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich," nevertheless it was an act of voluntary obedience *to a commandment that originated in the will of Another,* in the will of His Father.

VII. JESUS CHRIST RECEIVED HIS OWN AUTHORITY FROM THE FATHER.

In the seventh place, *Jesus Christ Received His Own Authority From His Father.* This we read in Jno. 13:3:

> "Jesus, knowing that *the Father had given all things into His hands,* and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God."

Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, has "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Matt 28:18), but it is a delegated authority, an authority that has been *"given* unto" Him, an authority He has *received from Another,* God the Father. As we read in Matt. 28:18:

> "All authority *hath been given unto Me* in heaven and on earth."

And we read in John 17:1, 2:

> "These things spake Jesus; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee: even as *Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh,* that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He should give eternal life."

VIII. JESUS CHRIST RECEIVED HIS MESSAGE FROM THE FATHER.

In the eighth place, *Jesus Christ received His message from the Father.* These are His Own Words found in Jno. 8:26, 40:

> "I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you: howbeit He that sent Me is true; and *the things which I heard from Him,* these speak I unto the world. . . . But now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the truth, *which I heard from God:* this did not Abraham."

Jesus Christ's Message was a Divine message, every word of it was God's Word, every word that the Christ of the Bible uttered was a Divine word, absolutely dependable and inerrant, but it did not originate with Him, it came from God the Father. He spoke only what He heard from the Father, as He declared in Jno. 7:16:

> "Jesus therefore answered them, and said, *My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me.*"

IX. THE FATHER GAVE JESUS CHRIST HIS WORKS TO ACCOMPLISH, AND IT WAS THE INDWELLING FATHER WHO DID THE WORKS.

In the ninth place, *The Father Gave Jesus Christ His Works To Accomplish, and It Was The Indwelling Father Who Did The Works.* For example, we read in Jno. 5:36:

> "But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works *which the Father hath given Me to accomplish,* the very works that

I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me,"

and many months later, on the night before the end of His earthly life, Jesus declared in Jno. 14:10:

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from Myself: *but the Father abiding in Me doeth His works.*"

X. JESUS CHRIST'S KINGDOM WAS APPOINTED UNTO HIM BY THE FATHER.

In the tenth place, *Jesus Christ's Kingdom Was Appointed Unto Him By God the Father.* This we read in Luke 22:29:

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, *even as My Father appointed unto Me.*"

Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, has a kingdom, a kingdom so vast that only a Divine Person could properly administer it, but He did not achieve that kingdom for Himself, His Father gave it to Him. He will appoint a kingdom to us, but His Father appointed His kingdom to Him.

XI. JESUS CHRIST SHALL ULTIMATELY DELIVER UP THE KINGDOM TO THE FATHER.

In the eleventh place, *Jesus Christ Shall Ultimately Deliver Up The Kingdom To The Father.* This we are plainly told by the Holy Spirit, speaking through the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 15:24:

"Then cometh the end, when *He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.*"

Jesus Christ shall still reign; for we are told in Luke 1:33:

> "And He shall reign over the house of Jacob *for ever;* and *of His kingdom there shall be no end."*

He shall still reign, but He shall reign eternally *in subordination to the Father.*

XII. JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF SHALL BE SUBJECTED TO THE FATHER THAT GOD MAY BE ALL AND IN ALL.

In the twelfth place, *Jesus Christ Shall Be Eternally Subjected To The Father, That God May Be All And In All.* This also the Holy Spirit tells us through the Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. 15:27, 28:

> "For, He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is excepted Who did subject all things unto Him. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, *then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him,* that God may be all in all."

Jesus Christ is not only now subordinated to the Father, and not only has He always been subordinated to the Father, but He also eternally shall be subordinated to God the Father.

XIII. GOD, THE FATHER, IS THE HEAD OF JESUS CHRIST.

In the thirteenth place, *God, The Father, Is The Head Of Christ, As Christ Is The Head Of Every*

Man, And As the Man Is Head Of the Woman. Turn to a most remarkable, and most instructive, and very suggestive passage, 1 Cor. 11:3:

> "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and *the head of Christ is God.*"

Jesus Christ is possessed in all their perfection and fullness of all the glorious attributes of Deity, and yet He does not desire nor seek the Headship of the universe. Satan sought the headship of the universe; Jesus Christ did not and does not. He rejoices that the Father is the head.

How many foolish men, puffed up with a little knowledge that they possess, or fancy that they possess, fret at the headship of Jesus Christ, they want to be head themselves; just as Satan did. They have fallen "into the condemnation of the devil" and the snare of the devil (1 Tim. 3:6, 7), that is "into the condemnation" and "the snare" into which Satan fell and thus fell from heights of glory to depths of shame. How many women in this wild, foolish day in which we are now living, fret at the headship of "the man." Overconscious of their ability and of their unquestionable equality intellectually with men, they wish to assert their equality by claiming the headship, which God for His Own wise purposes has bestowed on "the man," and thus they too fall "into the snare of the Devil," that is the snare into which Satan fell. Every woman-headed religious organization composed of both men and women sooner or later goes to smash. Yes, I say it solemnly, not profanely nor flippantly, it goes to "the Devil," in whose spirit it

originated. Let us all, both men and women, learn humility and to rejoice in our God-given position of subordination from Him we acknowledge as Head, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who, notwithstanding all His equality with the Father, gladly recognizes God the Father as the Head.

XIV. MEN DRAW NEAR UNTO GOD THROUGH CHRIST.

In the fourteenth place, *Men Draw Near Unto God Through Christ. God, Not Christ, Is The Ultimate Goal.* This, we are told in a passage that few of us have pondered as we ought. Heb. 7:25:

> "Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that *draw near unto God through Him,* seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

I shall never forget a day in which I heard Andrew Murray at Northfield many years ago expound this verse, Heb. 7:25, and dwell upon the fact that, while it was through Christ alone we could draw near unto God, it was *not to Christ Himself, but to God the Father,* we drew near. I knew this before. Indeed I am not sure that I had not already written my book, "What The Bible Teaches," in which I somewhat emphasized this; but it gained a new meaning for me that day. Oh! so many of us are so entirely taken up with Jesus Christ, the Son, that we lose sight of the great truth that He is "the way" *not to Himself, but to the Father.* WE NEED TO KNOW OUR FATHER GOD. In the experience of many twentieth century

Christians, Jesus, the Only begotten Son of God, Whose work it is to *"reveal* THE FATHER" (Jno. 1:18), has become so much to us that the Father, Whom He desires to reveal, has become practically nothing. He Himself, while He declared that he was, "The Way, the Truth, and the Life," declared, with equal clearness and with even more emphasis, that *He was the way to some one else, "to the Father."* His words are, as found in Jno. 14:6:

> "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh *unto the Father,* but by Me."

The Father, not the Son, is the ultimate goal.

Listen again to Heb. 7:25:

> "Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near UNTO GOD through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

It is *to the Father* I go. I go to the Father through the Son, but I do not stop at the Son, Who is "the Way," I press on unto *the Father,* unto *Whom He is the Way,* I "draw near *unto God* through Him."

XV. GOD, THE FATHER, IS JESUS CHRIST'S GOD.

Finally, *God The Father Is Jesus Christ's God.* Jesus Christ's words about this are very plain and very explicit. You will find them in Jno. 20:17:

> "Jesus said to her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto My brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and *My God* and your God."

Remember that these words were spoken by our Lord even after His resurrection. Jesus Christ is "Lord and God" to us, but God, the Father, is Father and God to Him. Listen to His words again:

> "I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and *My God* and your God."

To sum up all we have seen in this chapter concerning the Christ presented to us in the Bible, *Jesus Christ Is, And Eternally Shall Be, Subordinate To God, The Father.* In God, The Father, we have the Source of Deity; In Jesus Christ, Deity in Its Outflow. But in the Stream Is all the Perfection of the Fountain. To use Paul's words, "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9.)

It has been said that this conception, that in God the Father we have the Source of Deity but in Jesus Christ we have Deity in its outflow, is Sabellianism; but it is not, if we bear constantly in mind that God the Father, the Source of Deity, is a Person, and that Jesus Christ, the Son, the perfect Stream that flows from the Father, is also a definite and distinct Person.

What a marvelous and many-sided conception of the Christ it is that is given to us in this old, old Book, the Bible, and in the whole Book; not only in the books written after Christ came but also in the passages written a thousand years before He came, which looked forward to Him. Whence did David, and Isaiah, and Micah, and John, and Paul get their wondrously profound and wondrously unified conceptions of the Christ, conceptions that we, after eighteen hundred, yes, even after twenty-eight hundred years, have not even yet fully fathomed? There can be but one

reasonable or even fairly intelligent answer to that question: beyond a doubt they got their conceptions of the Christ, and the very words in which those conceptions are phrased, from God Himself.

Let us ponder these God-given words and behold the real Christ, the Christ of actual fact, and wonder, and admire and love and worship Him, and *through Him press on to the Father* that He, God, The Father, "may be all and in all."

CHAPTER III

THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE: WAS CHRIST JESUS IN EVERY RESPECT A REAL MAN, OR DID HE ONLY SEEM TO BE A MAN?

In this chapter we shall consider the question, The Christ of the Bible: Was Christ Jesus in every respect a Real Man? or did He only seem to be a Man?

We saw in our first chapter that the Christ of the Bible, Christ Jesus, the only real Christ, possessed, in all their perfection and fullness, all the distinctive and incommunicable attributes of Deity, that is, all the attributes that God possesses, and that God alone possesses, that "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and that all the distinctively Divine offices were also ascribed to Him, that He was equal to God, the Father, in Nature, Attributes, Authority, and Glory, that He is a Being to be worshiped even as God the Father is worshiped, that He is our Lord, and our God.

We saw in our second chapter that while Jesus possessed all the distinctive and incommunicable Attributes of Deity in all their perfection and fullness, that while He was equal to God the Father in His Nature, Attributes, Authority, and Glory, that He was, at the same time, and always had been, and always shall be, subordinate to the Father in position and office.

We shall now consider the question, Was He, when

on earth, at the same time that He was God also, a Real Man? and is He now a Real Man, up yonder in the Glory?

Let us look at three passages in the Bible.

Jno. 1:1, 14:

> "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God.* . . . And *the Word became flesh,* and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

1 Jno. 4:1-3:

> "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit *that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh* is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: *and this is the spirit of the antichrist,* whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already."

1 Tim. 2:5:

> "For there is One God, One Mediator also between God and men, *Himself Man,* Christ Jesus."

These remarkably plain and explicit passages of Scripture not only declare that Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, was a Real Man, but they declare also that the denial of the Reality of His Human Nature is one of the most fundamental of all errors, that the denial that He was a Real Man, the denial that Jesus Christ *came in the flesh,* is one of the distinctive marks of the

antichrist. The man who denies the Real Deity and Full Deity of Jesus Christ is fundamentally wrong: the one who denies that Jesus Christ was a Real Man at the same time that He was very God, is equally wrong. To deny that Jesus Christ was in every respect a Real Man is as much a "damnable heresy," as to deny that He was Real God.

The denial of the real Humanity of Jesus Christ was one of the first heresies that arose in the church, and it did great harm. It was taught that Jesus, the Christ, was only apparently Man, that He only seemed to be a Man. This heresy was called "Docetism," which name is derived from a Greek word meaning, "to seem to be." This error arose during the lifetime of the Apostle John. The Apostle John regarded this error with great horror, and it was sternly denounced by him. His first Epistle was largely aimed at this very heresy. Christian Science is largely a revamping of the same heresy. But Christian Science is not the only modern system that denies, or loses sight of, the Reality of the Human Nature of Jesus Christ. Many people who consider themselves as extremely and preëminently orthodox, are so entirely taken up with the glorious fact that our Lord Jesus was and is God, that they entirely lose sight of the other glorious truth that at the same time our Saviour was and is God, He is also in the fullest sense, our Brother, as truly a Human Being as you or I are, and that now up in the glory at the right hand of God the Father there is a Man, *"the Man,* Christ Jesus."

When Stephen's eyes were opened just before he himself entered the glory, he cried, "Behold, I see

the heavens opened, and *the Son of man* standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7 : 56.)

It was in part the one-sided emphasis laid upon the Deity of Jesus Christ, and the forgetting of the fact that He was at the same time a Real Man, that led to the forming of that exceedingly pernicious system known as Modern Unitarianism. Modern Unitarianism stood for a truth, an exceedingly important truth, the truth of the Real Humanity of Jesus Christ, of which many had lost sight; but it, in turn, lost sight of the other exceedingly important truth, that Jesus Christ was also Real God.

We have already seen that the doctrine of the real Deity of the Christ is found in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament: we shall see to-day that on the other hand, the New Testament is full of the doctrine that Jesus, the historic Christ, the Christ of God, was and is a Real Man in every respect.

I. HUMAN NAMES ARE USED IN SPEAKING OF THE CHRIST.

To come right to our subject: in the first place, *Human Names are used in speaking of the Christ.* We saw in our first chapter that sixteen or more Names that clearly imply Deity are used of Jesus Christ, over and over again in the Bible, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, that, for example, He was called "God," and "God Blessed Forever," and "Mighty God"; but it is equally true that Names that clearly imply that He was and is Man, are also used of Him. Take for example 1 Tim 2 : 5 :

"For there is One God, One Mediator also between God and men, *Himself Man,* Christ Jesus."

The late Pastor Russell taught among his many errors, that Jesus Christ before He became incarnate, was a purely Spiritual Being, that during His life upon earth He was a purely Human Being, and that now since His resurrection He is a purely Divine Being. But Stephen said, when the wondrous vision of the Christ in the glory was granted him just before his own entrance into glory, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the *Son of man* standing on the right hand of God." Jesus Christ is called in the Bible the "Son of man" no less than seventy-seven times. It is a significant number.

II. THE CHRIST HAD A HUMAN PHYSICAL NATURE.

In the second place, *The Christ of the Bible, Jesus Christ, had a Human Physical Nature. He was a Real Man as far as His Body was concerned.* We see this in Jno. 1:14:

"And the Word *became flesh,* and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

We see the same thing again in Heb. 2:14:

"Since then the children are sharers in *flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death* He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil."

Here we are told that He Who from all eternity was "the effulgence of (God's) glory, and the very Image of His substance," and Who upheld "all things by the word of His power" (see Heb. 1:3), when He became incarnate in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of the Bible, *"partook of flesh and blood."* His body then was a Real Body, as real a Human Body as yours or mine.

The denial of the Reality of Christ's Human Body is a distinctive mark of the antichrist. This we are told in so many words in 1 Jno. 4:1-3:

> "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. *Hereby* know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come *in the flesh* is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: *and this is the spirit of the antichrist,* whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already."

The denial of the reality of all bodies and all matter, and so of necessity the denial of the Reality of Christ's Body, the assertion that all bodies and all matter are only "illusion," or "mortal thought," is one of the most fundamental and most damning errors of Christian Science. It unmistakably marks Christian Science as being of the antichrist.

III. JESUS CHRIST HAD A HUMAN PARENTAGE.

In the third place, *Jesus Christ had a human parentage.*

Read Luke 2:7:

"And she brought forth *her firstborn Son;* and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Here we are told that Jesus, the Christ of God, was *Mary's Son,* "her firstborn Son."

Turn now to Acts 2:30, 31:

"Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, (that is to David) that *of the fruit of his loins* He would set One upon His throne; he foreseeing this spake of the *resurrection of the Christ.*"

Here we are distinctly told that the Christ Who was to be raised, was the fruit of David's loins.

Read also Rom. 1:3, 4:

"Concerning His Son, *Who was born of the seed of David* according to the flesh, Who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; *even Jesus Christ* our Lord."

Here we are told that "Jesus Christ our Lord," was *"of the seed of David,"* "according to the flesh."

Turn now to Gal. 4:4:

"But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, *born of a woman.*"

Here we are distinctly told that the Son of God, the Christ Whom God sent forth, was *"born of a woman."* Note in passing, that it does not say, *born of a man.* It is oftentimes said by those who deny the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus that Paul knew nothing of it. Those who so say are not thereby

demonstrating their learning, but exposing their ignorance.

Turn now to Luke 1:35:

> "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come *upon thee,* and the power of the Most High shall *overshadow thee: wherefore* also the holy thing which is *begotten* shall be called the Son of God."

This passage clearly declares that the Son of God, the Christ of God, was begotten of a woman, of the Virgin Mary. It is as plain as day then, that the Christ of God had a human parentage and a human ancestry. He was Mary's Son and David's Seed, He "sprang out of Judah" (Heb. 7:14). The Virgin Mary was as truly the mother of Jesus, the Christ of God, as God was His Father. Our Saviour derived His Human Nature from Mary as truly as He derived His Divine Nature from God. This was the process by which the Eternal Word, which from all eternity "was with God and was God" (Jno. 1:1), "became flesh" (Jno. 1:14) in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Real Christ, the Christ of the Bible, the Only True Christ. (Compare Luke 1:35 and Jno. 1:1, 14.)

IV. THE CHRIST, AS A MAN, HAD HUMAN PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS.

In the fourth place, *The Christ, as a Man, had human physical limitations.*

1. Read Jno. 4:6:

> "And Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore,

being wearied with His journey, sat thus by the well."

Here we are told that *Jesus was weary.* It certainly was not as God that He was weary; for we are told in Isa. 40:28:

"Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard? *The Everlasting God,* Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, *fainteth not, neither is weary.*"

But, *as a Man,* Jesus, the Christ, our Lord and Saviour, was weary. Our Lord and Saviour knew what it meant to be truly weary, completely tired out physically, as really as any of us do. I am so glad He did.

2. Now turn to Matt. 8:24:

"And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves: but *He was asleep.*"

Here we are told that *Jesus Christ slept.* It certainly was not *as God* that He slept; for we are told in Ps. 121:4, 5:

"Behold, He that keepeth Israel
Will neither slumber nor sleep.
Jehovah is thy Keeper:
Jehovah is thy shade upon thy right hand."

3. Now, read Matt. 21:18:

"Now in the morning as He returned to the city, *He hungered.*"

Here we are told that *Jesus Christ hungered.*

4. Read also Jno. 19:28:

"After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the Scripture might be accomplished, saith, *I thirst.*"

Jesus Christ thirsted.

5. Turn now to Luke 22:44:

> "And *being in an agony* He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground."

Here we are told that, *Jesus,* the Christ of God, *suffered intense physical agony.*

6. Just one more passage on this particular point. Read 1 Cor. 15:3:

> "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that *Christ died* for our sins according to the Scriptures."

Here is the plain statement that *Jesus Christ died.* Some one will ask, Was it the Human Nature of Christ that died or the Divine Nature of Christ that died? Neither One nor the Other. It was not a Nature that died: it was a Person Who died: it was Jesus Christ Himself that died; and He was both God and Man. Paul tells us that it was *the "Lord of Glory"* that was *"crucified"* (1 Cor. 2:8), the One Who was at the same time God and Man.

If Jesus Christ had not been God He could not by His death have made a sufficient atonement to atone for the whole human race. If, on the other hand, He had not been at the same time Man, He could not have died as the representative of man, "the Second Adam." Only He Who was at the same time Son of God and Son of Man, at the same time really Divine and really human, could make an atonement that would be both *sufficient* and *applicable* to us; but as He was at the same time "very God of very God" and real man, He could and He did.

How wondrously profound, and consistent, and complete, and beyond all human philosophy is the philosophy of the Bible, when you take it all in. But if you leave any part out (for example, leave out either the Real Deity or the Real Humanity of Jesus Christ) and the whole system crumbles to the ground.

V. THE CHRIST, AS A MAN, WAS SUBJECT TO HUMAN INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL LIMITATIONS.

In the fifth [illegible], *The Christ, as a Man, was subject to human intellectual and moral limitations.*

1. Read Luke 2:52:

> "And *Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*"

Here we are definitely told that Jesus Christ (as a Man, during His childhood), *"advanced in wisdom* and in stature, and in favour with God and man." As He advanced from one state of wisdom to a higher state of wisdom, there must, of course, have been a time of comparative limitation in His wisdom. *As a man He was subject to human conditions of physical, mental, and moral growth.*

2. Now read Mark 13:32:

> "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, *neither the Son,* but the Father."

Here we are told that Jesus Christ, as a Man, setting you and me a very solemn example to follow in His steps, gave up the knowledge of the exact time of His own return. This fact does not at all cast a cloud either upon His Deity or upon the reliability and in-

errancy of anything *He taught;* for He Himself distinctly declared that every word He *taught* was *the Father's* teaching, and not His Own.

For example He says in Jno. 7:16:

> *"My teaching* is not Mine, but *His that sent Me."*

And He says in John 12:49, 50:

> "For I spake not from Myself; *but the Father That sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.* And I know that His commandment is life eternal: *the things* therefore *which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak."*

And in Jno. 14:10, he says:

> "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? *the words that I say unto you I speak not from Myself: but the Father abiding in Me* doeth His works."

And in the twenty-fourth verse of the same chapter, He says:

> "He that loveth Me not keepeth not My Words: and *the Word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's Who sent Me."*

And in Jno. 17:8, in one of the most solemn moments of His life, talking not to man, but to God Himself on the night before the crucifixion, Jesus, the Christ, says:

> "For *the words which Thou gavest Me I have given unto them;* and they received them."

The "Higher Critics" and the "New Theology" advocates, in their intense desire (which amounts almost to an obsession) to get around our Lord's endorse-

ment of the whole Old Testament as the inerrant Word of God, try to make out that in becoming a Man, "He emptied Himself" of His Omniscience, and that therefore He was liable to error, and that He was in error on this point. To sustain their point they urge Phil. 2:5-8:

> "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but *emptied Himself,* taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

And they lay the emphasis upon the words, *"emptied Himself,"* interpreting them to mean that *He emptied Himself of His Divine Attributes, including His Omniscience,* and that therefore He might be mistaken in some of His teachings. But any one who will look carefully at these words in their context, and with a sincere desire to discover what they really teach, and not to merely read into them what we would like to have them teach, will see at once that *these words speak of our Lord emptying Himself, not of His Divine Attributes, including His omniscience, but of His Divine glory.*

Furthermore, *even if they did teach that He emptied Himself of His omniscience, that would not at all help the enemy, for He distinctly declares in the passages that I have read you, that every word He spoke was not His, but the Father's, and, therefore, if every word He spoke was not His Father's, and conse-*

quently the inerrant Word of God, Jesus Christ was not only a Man, but He was a liar and a fraud. Who can believe that? I have a profound pity for any one who can.

3. Now read Heb. 4:15:

> "For we have not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but One that hath been in all points *tempted like as we are,* yet without sin."

Read also Heb. 2:18:

> "For in that He Himself *hath suffered being tempted,* He is able to succor them that are tempted."

In these two passages we are plainly and definitely told that *Jesus Christ was tempted.* It certainly was not as God that He was tempted, for we read in Jas. 1:13:

> "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; *for God cannot be tempted* with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man."

Oh, I rejoice that my Saviour, the Lord Jesus, is God, the God Who created all things and Who still "upholds all things by the Word of His power," (Heb. 1:3), but I also rejoice that He was Man, Real Man, and was tempted "in all points" like as I am, and so He can be not only my mighty Saviour but also my sympathizing Saviour.

Note very carefully the fact that He was tempted "without sin," or more exactly translated, *"apart from sin,"* entirely apart and separate from any trace of sin. There was no response in the heart of Jesus to yield for one moment to that which was wrong. Though

He was, for example, suffering the intensest pangs of hunger in one instance, and in another recoiled from death as no other man ever recoiled from death, for He was the "Prince of Light," not for one moment did He contemplate satisfying His hunger in a wrong way, and not for one moment did He turn back from the cross and its appalling and immeasurable agonies.

The question is often asked, could Jesus have yielded to temptation, could He have sinned? He could not—because He would not. He could not sin because *even as a man* He was perfectly holy, and sinning in thought or desire or word or act was a moral impossibility to Him. But the constraint that kept Him from sinning was not from without but from within, from His Own perfectly holy heart.

VI. THE CHRIST, AS A MAN, WAS SUBJECT TO LIMITATIONS OF POWER.

In the sixth place, *Jesus Christ, as a man, was subject to limitations of power.* We saw in the first chapter that He was omnipotent. Nevertheless as Man he was subject to limitations of power. This appears again and again in the New Testament.

1. Read Heb. 5:7:

> "Who *in the days of His flesh,* having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and having been heard for His godly fear."

Here we are told that Jesus Christ obtained deliverance from death, not by the exercise of His Own Almighty power, but by prayer. No less than twenty-five

times in the four short gospel records of the life here upon earth of our Lord, the Christ of God, is His praying mentioned. *Jesus Christ lived His life here on earth as a Man, obtaining power for His work and for His moral victories and achievements as other men obtain theirs, by prayer. As a Man He was subject to human conditions for obtaining what He desired.*

2. Furthermore, *As a Man,* Jesus Christ obtained power for His Divine works, not by His inherent Deity, but by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He was subject to the same conditions for obtaining and exercising power as other men. This we are distinctly and explicitly told in Acts 10:38:

> "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with Him."

VII. JESUS CHRIST SUSTAINED THE RELATIONSHIP OF MAN TO GOD, THE FATHER.

In the seventh place, *Jesus Christ sustained the relationship of Man to God, the Father.* This we are told in Jno. 20:17:

> "Jesus saith to her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto My brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and *My God* and your God."

Here Jesus Christ, though He had not hesitated to say that all men should honor Him "even as they honored the Father" (Jno. 5:22, 23), and that he that

had seen Him had seen the Father (Jno. 14:9), and though a week later when Thomas fell at His feet, and addressed Him as, "My Lord, and my God," He would unhesitatingly and approvingly accept this ascription of Deity to Himself (Jno. 20:26-28), nevertheless here He equally unhesitatingly calls God "My God." It is evident then that He bore the relation of Man to God, the Father.

VIII. JESUS CHRIST, AS A MAN, WAS IN EVERY RESPECT A REAL MAN.

Finally, *Jesus Christ, as a Man, was in every respect a Real Man.* This we are told in the epistle to the Hebrews, a book that emphasizes the full Deity of the Christ as almost no other book in the Bible.

Read Heb. 2:17:

> "Wherefore it behooved Him *in all things to be made like unto His brethren,* that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

Here we are definitely told *that Jesus Christ, as a Man, was made "in all things" like unto His brethren, subject to all the physical, mental, and moral conditions of existence essential* to human nature.

To sum up all that we have discovered from a careful and candid study of the Bible on this subject: Just as Jesus Christ, as God, was in all points like unto the Father, so also, as Man, He was in all points like unto us.

Now comes the question, a question that presents the

greatest difficulty of any question concerning the Person and Nature of Jesus Christ, How can we reconcile the Bible Doctrine of the True Deity of Jesus Christ with this other Bible Doctrine of the Real Human Nature of Jesus Christ?

The answer to this question that appears so difficult is really easy. The answer is this: Our main business is not to reconcile any two lines of truth, no matter how absolutely opposed to one another and contradictory to one another they may seem to us to be. Our chief business is to find out exactly what the various passages in the Bible mean, in their natural, grammatical interpretation. Then if we can reconcile them, well and good. If not, believe them both and leave the reconciliation to increasing knowledge. It is a thoroughly vicious principle of Biblical interpretation that we must interpret every passage in the Bible so that we can easily reconcile it with every other passage. It is this foolish principle of interpretation that gives rise to the one-sided theology in which narrow minded men revel. One man becomes a one-sided Calvinist and another a one-sided Arminian; and so on through the whole gamut of Christian Doctrine. Our business is to find out the plainly intended sense of the passage in hand as determined by the usage of the words found in it, by the grammatical construction and by the context.

Furthermore, we should always bear in mind that in many cases two truths that once seemed to us to be utterly irreconcilable or even to be flatly contradictory to one another, are now, with increased knowledge, seen to beautifully harmonize. So, it is only reasonable to suppose that truths that still seem to us to be

contradictory, perfectly harmonize in the infinite mind of God, and will some day perfectly harmonize in our minds also, when we approach more nearly to God's omniscience.

As I said in a previous chapter, I cannot understand the radio. What I know to be facts concerning it appear to me to be absolutely impossible and inconceivable. I have been told this last week that last Sunday a woman in Keene, New Hampshire, more than three thousand miles away, heard me last Sunday and even recognized my voice. What perfectly reliable witnesses tell me about what the radio does, appears to me to be absurd and impossible; but I believe it none the less. Indeed, I know it is true. To me it is a great mystery, an unsolvable mystery, and no one else really understands it, however much they may pretend to. Question them, and you will soon drive them up against a wall that they cannot go through or go over, and their attempted explanations are words, words, words—only words, that is all. But, I believe in the radio just the same. But, we cannot understand it, it is full of mystery to us, it is intellectually inconceivable; but we believe it just the same, because the evidence of what it does is conclusive and overwhelming. We would be mentally stupid and not "scientific" but utterly and ludicrously unscientific if we did not. We might boast that we were possessed of "the modern mind" and therefore could not believe anything we could not understand, but we would really be possessed of a prehistoric and unscientific mind. And just so, I believe in the full Deity of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and at the same time I believe in His Real Humanity.

I have a Christ and a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is unquestionably God. He made the heavens and the earth, and upholds the earth and moon and sun and the stupendous stars "by the Word of His Power" (Heb. 1:3). Oh, I am so glad, so unutterably glad, that He does, and that such an One, possessed of all the attributes of Deity in all their perfection and fullness, is my Saviour. *But I rejoice also that I have a Christ and a Saviour, Who, in the fullest and most real sense, is my Brother, a Fellow Man, a Real Man, Who lived His life here upon earth under the same conditions under which I live mine, subject to the same temptations that I am, yet absolutely "apart from sin," that He obtained victory by the power of the same Holy Spirit that is ready to help me as well, and that He obtained strength to work, to achieve, and to conquer in the same way that is open to me, by prayer.*

That was the thing about Unitarianism, the Unitarianism of Channing, and James Freeman Clarke, and Edward Everett Hale, that attracted me, namely, that Jesus Christ was my Brother, a Real Man, tempted in all points as I was, and that if He got the victory I could too, the same way He did. But the day came when I discovered that historic orthodoxy, the orthodoxy of the Bible properly understood, as stated in the standard creeds of the church, presented the same truth, and presented it even more fully than Unitarianism, and that, together with this precious truth that Unitarianism presented, it presented the other side of the truth, even more precious, a side to which Unitarianism was totally blind, that while Jesus Christ was in every respect a Real Man, He was also in every respect Real

God; that while the "Word became flesh and dwelt among us," that the Word Who so became flesh "was" "in the beginning and was with God, *and was God.*"

Where, in all the philosophers and sages of all lands and all ages, do we find a philosophy so profound, so well rounded, so complete, so symmetrical and in every way so satisfying and so wonderful as is contained in this Old, Old Book, whose utterances are from eighteen hundred and twenty-eight to thirty-four hundred and twenty-five years old? Where did the Bible writers, kings and peasants, fishermen and petty politicians, herdmen and whatnot, learn this matchless, this imperishable, this one and only perfect and absolute philosophy? There can be but one rational answer to that question, only one answer that has the slightest semblance of candor or of intelligence: they learned it from God, both the philosophy and the phrasing of it. Beyond an honest peradventure, these "men spake from God, being carried along by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21).

Note—At this point we would naturally and logically take up The Earthly Life of the Christ of the Bible; but I have already done this in my book THE REAL CHRIST (published by George H. Doran Company, 1920), so we shall not repeat here.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE: HIS DEATH; HOW AND WHY HE DIED, AND THE RESULTS OF HIS DEATH

Our subject in this Chapter is, The Christ of the Bible: His Death, How and Why He Died, and the Results of His death.

One of the most fundamental facts regarding the Christ set before us in the Bible is the fact of His Death, and one of the most outstanding points at which the Christ of the Bible is most clearly seen to be an entirely different Christ from the Christ of many of our modern romancers and poets and sociologists and moralists and popular preachers and even of many of our "modern" theologians, theologians sometimes in supposedly orthodox seminaries, is in regard to the manner, the purpose and the results of His Death.

Consider fourteen passages from the Word of God.

1 Cor. 15: 1-4:

> "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the Word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that *Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures."

Heb. 2:14:

"Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that *through death* He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil."

Matt. 20:28:

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give His life a ransom for many.*"

Luke 9:30, 31:

"And behold, there talked with Him two men, who were Moses and Elijah; who *appeared in glory,* and *spake of His decease* which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."

Rev. 5:8-12:

"And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying,

Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God *with Thy blood* men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth.

And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice,

Worthy is the Lamb that *hath been slain* to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

1 Cor. 11:26:

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, *ye proclaim the Lord's death* till He come."

Isa. 53:5, 6:

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and *Jehovah hath laid* (*made to strike*) *on Him the iniquity of us all.*"

Gal. 3:10, 13:

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them . . . (13) *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*"

2 Cor. 5:21:

"Him Who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Rom. 3:24, 25:

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God set forth to be a *propitiation,* through faith, *in His blood,* to show His righteousness because of the

passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God."

1 Pet. 3:18, 19:

"Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the *righteous for the unrighteous,* that He might bring us to God; *being put to death* in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Matt. 12:40:

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale (sea-monster); so shall the Son of man be *three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

Acts 2:22-31:

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; Him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men *did crucify and slay*: Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David saith concerning Him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face;

For He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced:

Moreover, *my flesh* also *shall dwell in hope:*

Because Thou *wilt not leave my soul unto Hades,*

Neither wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to *see corruption.*

Thou madest known unto me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of gladness with Thy countenance.

Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would set One upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that *neither was He left unto Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.*"

Jno. 1 : 29 :

"On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, *the Lamb* of God, that *taketh away the sin of the world!*"

What I have to say in this chapter will be entirely an exposition of these and other passages of God's Own Book and God's Only Book, the Bible, in which the Death of the Christ of the Bible, the true Christ, the only real Christ that ever existed, God's Own Christ, Christ Jesus, is described and explained. I have no theory of my own regarding the Death of Jesus Christ: I accept in all their fullness and in every detail all the revelations regarding the Death of His Son Jesus Christ, my Saviour and my Lord, that God Himself has been pleased to make in this wonderful Book, the Bible. I have not the slightest desire to speculate at all on the question, but I desire to know all that God Himself has been pleased to reveal on the

subject. And God has been pleased to reveal a vast deal, far more than most of us know, far more than any of us fully comprehend. We shall still be studying and pondering and ever more and more fully understanding in eternity what God revealed so many centuries ago in this inexhaustible Book of God. All that we have to say will be merely an exposition of what God has so clearly revealed.

Let us group what God has revealed under four heads:

I. The Importance of the Death of the Christ.
II. The Manner of the Death of the Christ.
III. The Purpose of the Death of the Christ.
IV. The Results of the Death of the Christ.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

First then let us consider the importance of Christ's Death.

1. In the first place, *The fundamental importance of Christ's Death is seen in the fact that the Death of Jesus Christ is mentioned directly more than one hundred and seventy-five times in the New Testament. Besides this there are very many prophetic and typical references to the Death of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament.* Many of these direct references to the death of the Christ in the New Testament and many also of the prophetic and typical references to His death in the Old Testament cover many verses. So we see of what prime importance in that revelation of truth which God has made to us in His Own Word is the Death of Jesus Christ. If we should print in red, the color of blood, every reference to the Death of

Jesus Christ in the Bible, most of us would be amazed to find how red a Bible we had.

2. Again, *We see the importance of the Death of Jesus Christ from the clear and definite statements made in the Word of God, that the second Person of the Trinity, the Eternal Son of God, became a Man, took upon Himself flesh and blood for the specific purpose of dying.* This we are told in the clearest possible language. For example we read in Heb. 2:14:

> "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that (*in order that*) *through death* He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil."

It is clear from this passage that *the incarnation was for the specific purpose that the Christ might die.* Jesus Christ's Death was not, as so many of our "modern" theologians seek to make it out to have been, a mere incident of His human life. It was the supreme purpose for which He became a Man. He became a man *"in order that" He might die as man and for man.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared to His disciples that *He came into this world for the specific purpose that He might die as a ransom.* These are His words, in Matt. 20:28:

> "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give His life a ransom for many."*

3. Again, *We see the fundamental and tremendous and transcendent importance of Christ's Death in that when Moses and Elijah came back from the other*

world to talk with Jesus Christ, the only authentic and indubitable and Divinely approved instance of the dead coming back and having communion with those still living on earth, the one subject about which they talked was the Death of Jesus Christ.

Read it for yourself as it is clearly set forth in Luke 9:30, 31:

> "And behold, there talked with Him two men, who were Moses and Elijah; *who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease* which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."

Of what tremendous importance *the Death* of Jesus Christ must be that this was the one thing that those who came back to this earth from the other world talked about in this unparalleled interview that they held with the Lord Jesus Christ while He was here on earth.

4. In the fourth place, *We see the great importance of the Death of Jesus Christ in the fact that the Death of the sacrificial Lamb of God is the one central theme of Heaven's song.* This we are told in that wondrously beautiful picture of the Heavenly world given us in Rev. 5:8-14:

> "And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down *before the Lamb,* having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And *they sing a new song,* saying,
>
> Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for *Thou wast slain,* and didst purchase unto God *with Thy blood* men of every

tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth.

And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice,

Worthy is *the Lamb that hath been slain* to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying,

Unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and *unto the Lamb,* be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, forever and ever.

And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped."

It is evident from this that those who call themselves Christians but do not really believe that the Christ actually died at all, but that His supposed death, and all death, is an "illusion," or "mortal thought," and those also who believe that He actually died, but that His death was merely a brave martyr's death, and that we are not redeemed *by His shed blood,* but by His life and His example, if they get to heaven at all, they will be very lonesome there, and will have no part whatever in Heaven's song.

5. We see again, *The central importance of the Death of Christ in Paul's clear declaration that there are just two fundamental truths, just two central and*

all governing facts in the Gospel which he proclaims, and that these two fundamental truths, these two central and all governing facts are first, that the Christ died and was buried, and second that He arose again. Let me read to you Paul's own "God breathed" words, 1 Cor. 15:1-4:

> "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the *Gospel which I preached* unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For *I delivered unto you* first of all that which also I received: that *Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures; and *that He was buried;* and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures."

6. *The immeasurable importance of the death of Christ is also seen in that His death was the one thing about Himself that our Lord Jesus desired to be kept in perpetual remembrance by His disciples after His departure.* This we clearly see in the words that Jesus Himself spoke in appointing the Lord's Supper. Read Luke 22:19, 20:

> "And He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave to them, saying, *This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me.* And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant *in My blood,* even that which is *poured out for you.*"

So important was this in our Lord's eyes that He later made a direct revelation regarding it to the

Apostle Paul. This Paul himself tells us in 1 Cor. 11:23-26:

> *"For I received of the Lord* that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, This is My body, which is for you; *this do in remembrance of Me.* In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant *in My blood:* this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, *ye proclaim the Lord's death* till He come."

7. Once more, *We see the fundamental and preëminent importance of the Death of Jesus Christ in all the Spirit controlled thinking of Paul in that he says in another place,* in 1 Cor. 2:2:

> "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and *Him crucified."*

It is clear as day from all these considerations that there is nothing else more important, if there is anything else as important in true Christian thinking, and in any theology that has any right whatever to term itself Christian, than correct thinking regarding the Death of Jesus Christ.

II. THE MANNER OF THE DEATH OF THE CHRIST.

Now let us consider the Manner of the Death of the Christ of God. We shall see as we go on that this also is of great importance, that is, that not only is the fact of His Death important, but also the exact manner of His death is of great importance.

1. First of all under this head, *The Bible teaches us that the Death of Jesus Christ, the Christ of God was a real death, and not a mere "apparent death" or "illusion."* One of the earliest heresies to arise in the church was that of Docetism, as it was called. The word "Docetism" is derived from a Greek word meaning "to appear to be" or "seem to be." The pestilent heretics who bore this name taught that the body of Jesus Christ did not really exist, that it only *seemed to be,* and of course that necessarily involved the thought that His Death was not a real death, but only *an apparent Death.* Much of John's wonderful First Epistle is directed against this error, and John uses unmistakable and very vigorous language regarding it which you can read for yourselves in 1 Jno. 4: 1-6. This old, old heresy is revamped and exploited anew in that system that is so prevalent and so active among us to-day called "Christian Science," which teaches that the Death of Jesus was not a real Death, but only "illusion" or "mortal thought." It goes further and denies that there is really any such thing as death with anybody: it affirms that all so-called *"Death"* does not really exist, but is "illusion" or "mortal thought," that even when Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy herself seemed to die she did not really die, but only mistakenly thought she did, or as one of their great leaders, and Mrs. Eddy's most intimate friend during her last days, Jacob Fry, declared at the time, "Mother Eddy was in error for a time." But this "error" on Mother Eddy's part was so strong that it was deemed wise to bury her *seeming* body that *seemed* to die. Mrs. Eddy did not borrow her very ancient heresy directly from the early

Docetists but from Dr. Quimby. In her earlier publications she acknowledged the source of her philosophy, but later saw fit to deny it and said it was a direct revelation. If it was a revelation the source of this revelation is clearly stated in 1 Jno. 4:1-6, it was a revelation not from God, but from the Devil, whose very existence she denied. *But the Bible declares that the Death of Christ Jesus, the Christ of God, was a real Death and not a mere seeming Death.* These are Paul's *"God breathed"* words found in 1 Cor. 15:3, 4:

> "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that *Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures; and that *He was buried."*

Paul was evidently determined that no one should mistake the meaning of his words, that all men should understand it was a real death, that He really *"died"* and was really *"buried."*

2. In the second place, as to the manner of Christ's Death, *The Death of Jesus Christ was a separation of the spirit from the body.* The body of Jesus was laid in Joseph's tomb and there remained for three days and three nights, but the spirit of Jesus went into Hades (the abode, up to the time of our Lord's ascension, of all the spirits of those who had died, both good and bad). This we are told again and again in a variety of forms by our Lord Himself, and by His apostles. Listen to what Peter said on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:23-31:

> "Him (that is, Jesus of Nazareth, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men

did crucify and slay: Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David saith concerning Him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face;
For He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced:
Moreover *my flesh* also shall dwell in hope:
Because Thou wilt not leave *my soul unto Hades,*
Neither wilt Thou give Thy Holy one to *see corruption.*
Thou madest known unto me the ways of life;
Thou shalt make me full of gladness with Thy countenance.

Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would set One upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither *was He left unto Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption."*

The meaning of these words is as plain as language can make it, namely, that Christ Himself ("He"), that is, His *spirit* or *"soul"* went *into "Hades"* and His *"flesh,"* that is His body, was left in the tomb but was not permitted to *"see corruption."* This same Peter at a later day, wrote about this in 1 Pet. 3: 18-20:

"Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to *death in the flesh,* but *made alive* in the spirit; *in which also* He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

The meaning of this also is plain enough, namely, that Christ was put to death as far as His "flesh," his body, was concerned, but at the same time His "spirit" was made alive and departed to Hades. There are other interpretations of this passage made by good men, but they will not bear careful examination, if one is to take these inspired words at their face value.

Our Lord Himself declared to the dying thief a short time before the departure from His body, in Luke 23:43:

"Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Their bodies still hung on the two crosses dead, but together our glorious Lord and that former thug and assassin—but now penitent and believing and saved sinner—*entered "Paradise,"* that is that part of Hades where up to our Lord's ascension all the spirits of the righteous dead went.

Our Lord Jesus says again in Matt. 12:40:

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights *in the heart of the earth."*

Here we are told that the spirit of Jesus, that is Jesus Himself as distinguished from the house He inhabited (2 Cor. 5:1) (that is, His body), was in Hades, *"in the heart of the earth."*

3. In the third place as regards the Manner of His

death, *The Death of the Christ of the Bible was by crucifixion and of a broken heart, a heart broken by the weight of men's sins.* It was so predicted that He would die and it is so recorded as a fact of history that He did die.

(1) As to the prediction that He would die by crucifixion, read Isa. 53:5:

> "But he was *wounded* for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

The literal meaning of the word here translated *"wounded"* is *"pierced."* The same Hebrew word is so translated in the R. V. of Isa. 51:9 (two chapters back).

Turn now to Zech. 12:10, 11:

> "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto Me *Whom they have pierced."*

You will also find clear prophetic references to His *death by crucifixion* and some details regarding the circumstances that attended His crucifixion in Psalm 22, for example in verses 14 to 18:

> "I am poured out like water,
> And all *my bones are out of joint:*
> My heart is like wax;
> It is melted within me.
> My strength is *dried up* like a potsherd;
> And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws;
> And Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

For dogs have compassed me:
A company of evildoers have inclosed me;
They *pierced my hands and my feet.*
I may *count all my bones;*
They look and stare upon me.
They part my garments among them,
And upon my vesture do they cast lots."

This same Psalm begins with the cry that our Lord Jesus uttered as He died, as He gave up His spirit on the cross:

"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

We have not time to consider the typical prophecies regarding our Lord's Death *by crucifixion,* as for example the lifting up of the serpent to which our Lord Himself referred in Jno. 3:14, 15, as a type of His Own lifting up on the cross.

As to the historical account that our Lord died by *crucifixion,* it is so familiar to us all that it does not need quoting to-day.

(2) As to the prediction that the Christ would die *of a broken heart* you will note a reference to it in the passage we have just read from the twenty-second Psalm (vs. 14). You will find it explicitly set forth in another Messianic Psalm, Psalm 69, verses 20, 21:

"Reproach *hath broken my heart;* and I am full of heaviness:
And I looked for some to take pity, but there was none;
And for comforters, but I found none.
They gave Me also gall for my food;
And in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink."

As to the historical fulfillment of the prophecy that Christ would die of a broken heart, we find it in John 19:34:

> "Howbeit one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and straightway *there came out blood and water.*"

The coming forth from the pierced side of Jesus of "blood and water" which John here records, but of which he did not know the significance, and did not explain and could not have explained, is clear proof that our Lord died as it was predicted He would, *of a broken heart.* When a man dies of a broken heart the blood rushes from the heart into the pericardium, the sac surrounding the heart, there it lies for a little while and then separates into its constituent elements of serum (or, "water") and red blood corpuscles (or, "blood"). This is clearly what occurred in the case of our Lord Jesus, and when some time after His death the Roman soldier drove his spear through His side into the pericardium the serum (or, "water") and red blood corpuscles (or, "blood") flowed out, and John saw them.

(3) It was necessary that the Christ Who was to be the Saviour of men not only die, but die by the exact mode by which He did die, that is by crucifixion. This is brought out very clearly by Paul in Gal. 3:10, 13:

> "For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them . . . (13) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law,

having *become a curse for us;* for it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" (cf. Deut. 27:26; 21:23).

By dying *by crucifixion* our Lord, in the most literal way took our place, the place that belonged to you and me, the place of the curse, which we brought upon ourselves by our sin; and the moment we accept Him we step into His place, the place of perfect acceptance before God. As Paul puts it in another place, 2 Cor. 5:21:

> "Him Who knew no sin He (that is God) made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

The Bible is indeed a wonderful Book; how amazingly what is said in the earliest books of the Bible fits into what is said in the latest books of the Bible. Why is that? The answer to this question is easy and also deeply significant. It is because all the books of the Bible, the earliest as well as the latest, have one author, that is GOD, God speaking through the man who wrote Deut. 21:23 and also through the man who wrote Gal. 3:10, 13 more than fifteen hundred years later.

III. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

We now come to the exceedingly important question, What was the purpose of Christ's Death? Here is where many who unhesitatingly call themselves Christians differ widely from one another; but it is also where the Bible is unmistakably plain and unhesitatingly definite.

1. In the first place, *The Bible clearly and positively*

declares that Jesus Christ died because of the sins of others; that is, that it was sin that made His Death necessary, but that it was not His Own sin but the sin of others that He bore in His Death. His Death was vicarious, that is, a righteous Person Who deserved to live dying in the place of unrighteous persons who deserved to die. This we are told over and over again in the Old Testament, and also in the New Testament. I will cite only a few of the very many passages in which this great truth, which is so widely denied to-day, is set forth. Read first of all Isa. 53 : 5, 6, 8, 10-12 :

> "But He was wounded *for our transgressions,* He was bruised for our iniquities; *the chastisement of our peace* was upon Him; and *with His* stripes *we* are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and *Jehovah hath laid* (literally, *made to strike*) *upon Him the iniquity of us all* . . . (8) By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who among them considered that *He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?* . . . (10-12) Yet it pleased Jehovah *to bruise Him;* He hath put Him to grief; when *Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin,* He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of Himself shall My righteous Servant justify many; and *He shall bear their iniquities.* Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall

divide the spoil with the strong; because *He poured out His soul unto death,* and *was numbered with the transgressors:* yet *He bare the sin of many,* and made intercession for the transgressors."

In these verses it is repeatedly asserted that the Messiah *died because of sin,* and *not because of His Own sins but because of the sins of others. His death, the death of a righteous person who deserved to live, was substituted for the death of sinners who deserved to die.* Turning now to the New Testament read 1 Pet. 3:18:

"Because Christ also *suffered for sins* once, the *righteous for* (in the place of; or, in behalf of) *the unrighteous.*"

Here it is clearly and distinctly declared that the Christ died *for sins,* and not His Own sins but the sins of others, *"the righteous in behalf of the unrighteous,"* a righteous One Who deserved to live, dying in behalf of unrighteous ones who deserved to die. That is to say His Death was *vicarious.* Read also Rom. 4:24, 25:

"But for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was *delivered up for* (more exactly, *because of*) our trespasses, and was raised for (more literally, because of) our justification."

So again we read in 1 Cor. 15:3:

"Christ died for our sins."

To quote Peter once more, listen to 1 Pet. 2:24:

"Who His Own self *bare our sins in His body upon the tree."*

If the Bible makes anything as plain as day by clear and definite statement and by constant repetition, it makes it plain as day that the Death of Jesus, the Christ of God, was *vicarious, i.e., a righteous Person Who deserved to live, dying in the place of unrighteous persons who deserved to die. His death was substitutionary, i.e., His death substituted for our own death.* If the Bible does not teach that, it does not teach anything, and what it really means is such a hopeless riddle it is a waste of time to try to solve it, and the Bible is good for nothing except junk. But the Bible does teach it definitely, plainly, positively, repeatedly, and if you deal honestly with the Bible you cannot fail to see it. Those who deny it begin usually by twisting the Bible to make it mean what it does not say, and end up by discrediting the Bible altogether, and flatly denying its plain statements.

2. In the second place, *The Bible clearly and positively declares that Christ gave His life (or died)* AS A RANSOM; *that is, His Death was the price paid to redeem others from death.* Jesus Christ Himself declares this in no uncertain terms. You will find this plain declaration of our Lord in Matt. 20:28:

> "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give His life a ransom for many.*"

These words are as plain and unmistakable in their meaning as words can by any possibility be.

3. In the third place, *Jesus Christ's Soul was made a guilt offering for sin, that is to say, that it is on the ground of His Death that pardon is granted to sinners.* This we are told in the Old Testament in Isa. 53:10:

"Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when *Thou shalt make His soul an offering* (Hebrew, a *trespass* offering, or, *guilt* offering. See R.V. Marg.) *for sin,* He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand."

What a "guilt offering" is we are told in Lev. 6:6, 7. If you will read these verses you will see that a "guilt offering" was an offering of an animal to die on the ground of whose death pardon would be granted. This thought in regard to Christ's Death is repeated over and over again in the New Testament. For example, we read in Eph. 1:7:

"In Whom *we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,* according to the riches of His grace."

Here we are distinctly told that it is on the ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ that "we" (i.e., believers in Jesus Christ) obtain "the forgiveness of our trespasses," that is, that Jesus Christ was made a guilt offering for sin, that it was on the ground of His Death that pardon has been granted to us who believe on Him. We see the same thing again in Rom. 5:10 and Heb. 9:22 and in various other passages.

4. In the fourth place, *Jesus Christ died* AS A PROPITIATION *for our sins, God set Him forth to be a propitiation by His blood; that is to say, that He, through the shedding of His blood, or Death, is that by which the wrath of God against us as sinners is appeased.* Both John and Paul declare this in the most explicit terms. Read 1 Jno. 4:10:

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that

> He loved us, and sent His Son to be *the propitiation* for our sins."

The word translated "propitiation" in this passage is defined in Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament as a "means of *appeasing,*" and that is the correct definition of the term. So then we are here told that God sent His Son to be the means of appeasing His Own Holy wrath at sin by taking the penalty of sin upon Himself by dying on the Cross.

Now read Rom. 3:25, 26:

> "Whom God *set forth to be a propitiation,* through faith, *in His blood,* to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just, and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus."

The word translated "propitiation" in this verse is not exactly the same as the one so translated in 1 Jno. 4:10, but they are from exactly the same root, differing only in their ending, and mean practically the same thing. Thayer's definition of the word here translated "propitiation" is, "an expitiatory sacrifice." Prof. Charles Foster Kent in his demonstrably dishonest "Shorter Bible," while he gives as a whole the passage in Romans from which these verses are taken, deliberately and dishonestly cuts out these verses without the slightest pretext of any manuscript evidence for so doing (and there is no manuscript warrant whatever for so doing), and with no other discoverable reason for so doing than that he does not like the plain teaching of these verses. Yet while he does this

he unblushingly declares in the preface to his "Shorter Bible" that it contains all "those parts of the Bible which are of vital interest and practical value to the present age." This statement is one of the most shameful lies that was ever uttered by a professedly Christian man, and goes far towards making his "Shorter Bible" the most colossal literary fraud of the twentieth century. The teaching of the Bible is clear as crystal, and this omission of these verses in Kent's "Shorter Bible" is a confession that the teaching of the Bible is clear, but as Professor Kent is not willing to face that teaching, he silently omits it with a subtlety worthy of the old serpent himself (Gen. 3:1). The teaching of these verses is, as already said, that Jesus Christ died as a propitiation for our sins, that is, that through the shedding of His blood, through His Death being substituted for our death, the wrath of God against us as sinners is appeased.

The meaning of all this clearly is that God is Holy and must hate sin, that His Holiness and hatred of sin must manifest themselves, that His wrath at sin must strike somewhere, either upon the sinner himself, or upon a lawful substitute, and that His wrath at our sin struck on Jesus Christ. As Isaiah puts it in Isa. 53:6:

> "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and *Jehovah hath* laid (literally, *made to strike*) *on Him the iniquity of us all.*"

And as he puts it again in verse eight:

> "By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who among them

considered that *He was cut off* out of the land of the living *for the transgression of My people to whom the stroke was due?"*

The "stroke" due to others fell upon Him, and He was consequently "cut off out of the land of the living." THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST HAD ITS FIRST CAUSE IN THE DEMANDS OF GOD'S HOLINESS. This doctrine is extremely distasteful to the proud natural heart, and to a great many of our "modern" theologians, but it is the clear and unmistakable teaching of God's Word.

5. In the fifth place, *Christ died as our Passover Lamb; that is, that His shed blood might serve as a ground upon which God would pass over and spare us.* This we read in 1 Cor. 5:7:

"For *our passover* also hath *been sacrificed,* even Christ."

Just what a passover sacrifice signifies we are told in Ex. 12:3, 6, 7, 12, 13, 23:

"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household: . . . (6, 7) and ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at even. And *they shall take of the blood,* and *put it on the two side posts and on the lintel,* upon the houses wherein they shall eat it. . . . (12, 13) For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the

gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am Jehovah. And *the blood shall be to you for a token* upon the houses where ye are: and *when I see the blood,* I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. . . . (23) For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when *He seeth the blood* upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, *Jehovah will pass over* the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you."

It is clear from these verses that a passover lamb was a lamb upon the ground of whose shed blood God passed over the houses where the blood was sprinkled, and spared the first-born in those houses. So then *by saying:*

"Our Passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ,"

God declares that Jesus Christ was sacrificed, or died, in order that a ground might be provided, namely, His shed blood, upon which God could and would pass over and spare us.

IV. THE RESULTS OF THE DEATH OF THE CHRIST.

Now let us look at *the Results of the Death of the only true Christ, the Christ of the Bible,* God's Own Christ, Christ Jesus, as God Himself clearly sets them forth in His Own Word, the Bible. What the Bible says on this subject is of supreme importance and it is wonderful, far surpassing anything to be found in the most profound and most ingenious and most far-sighted and most daring of all man-made philosophies.

We will group what the Bible has to say on this subject under four heads:

First, The Results of Christ's Death in Relation to Men in General, both Believers and Unbelievers;

Second, The Results of Christ's Death in Relation to Believers;

Third, The Results of Christ's Death in Relation to the Devil and the Powers of Darkness;

Fourth, The Results of Christ's Death in Relation to the Material Universe.

1. First then, THE RESULTS OF CHRIST'S DEATH IN RELATION TO MEN IN GENERAL, Both Believers and Unbelievers.

(1) First of all, *The Bible declares that by the Death of Jesus Christ, by His lifting up on the cross all men are drawn unto Him.* This He Himself proclaims in Jno. 12:32, 33:

> "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto Myself.* But this He said, *signifying by what manner of death He should die.*"

The lifting up of Christ here referred to is His lifting up on the cross, where He died as an atoning sacrifice for sin. John himself declares this in verse thirty-three, "But this He said, *signifying by what manner of death He should die.*" This verse is often interpreted to mean that if we lift up Christ in our preaching, men will be drawn to Him. Now it is true that if we do lift Him up in our preaching men will be drawn unto Him, but this clearly is not the meaning of the verse. The words of our Lord refer entirely to His being lifted up on the cross to die as an atoning sacrifice for our sins, and by thus dying He

does draw all men to Himself. The Death of Christ is the world's great magnet, drawing men in grateful love to Him Who died in their place. There are many who will resist that drawing, but none the less will they be drawn.

This verse is often taken to teach universal salvation, but if we look at it carefully we see that it teaches nothing of the kind. It says all will be *drawn* unto Him, it does not say that all will yield to the drawing and come; and we are elsewhere definitely taught that many will not come and therefore will be lost. Furthermore the context clearly shows that the "all men" of the passage does not mean every individual man, but all races of men, both the Jew and the Gentile (Greek).

(2) In the second place, *By the Death of Jesus Christ a propitiation is provided for the whole world.* This John tells us in 1 Jno. 2:2:

> "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but *also for the whole world.*"

The propitiation that was made by His atoning Death on the cross was for *"the whole world."* That is to say, by the Death of Christ a basis is provided upon which God can righteously deal in mercy *with all mankind, with every member of the human race.* The word here translated "propitiation" means "a means of appeasing," and the thought is, by the Death of Jesus, the Christ of God, God's Holy wrath at the sinner is appeased and a basis provided upon which God can deal in mercy with "the whole world." All of God's dealings in mercy with any man are on the ground of Jesus Christ's Death. This is as true of

God's dealings in mercy with those who are still unbelievers, or even profane and violent opposers of the truth, as it is of God's dealings with those who are His children through faith in Jesus Christ. Only on the ground of Christ's Death can God deal in mercy with any man.

The question will arise at once, "How then did God deal in mercy with those who lived before the time of Jesus Christ's Death upon the cross?" The answer to this question is very simple. It will be found in Rev. 13:8, A.V.:

> "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship Him, whose names are not written in the book of life of *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*"

(The change made in this verse in the American Revision is not warranted by the best Greek texts.) The Death of Christ was in God's sight, an eternal fact. He planned it from the very beginning, even before man fell, and took it into consideration in all His dealings with men from Eden to Calvary. On the basis of the atoning Death of Jesus Christ which He had already purposed and planned, God dealt in mercy with sinners even before that Death became an historic fact.

God is dealing in grace to-day with every member of the human race. He permits the vilest sinner to live and the most blasphemous infidel, and He gives them food and drink and health and countless other blessings, but all of this is on the ground of the Death of that very Son of God Whom the sinner rejects and perhaps despises and slanders and blasphemes. Col.

Robert Ingersoll had many blessings in his life and they were all granted him on the ground of the atoning Death of that very Jesus of Nazareth, "the Christ of the Bible," Whom he so grossly and so outrageously wronged.

It is to be noted however that the propitiation of Christ bears a different relation to the believer to that which it bears to the world in general. This comes out very clearly in the exact wording of 1 Jno. 2:1, 2, as found in the R.V.:

> "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation *for our sins;* and not for ours only, but also *for the whole world."*

You will note that it does not say that Jesus Christ is the propitiation *for the sins of* the whole world. He is "a propitiation *for our sins,"* that is, for the believer's sins; but, while not a propitiation for the unbeliever's sins, He is a propitiation *"for the whole world." The propitiation avails for all; it brings a real blessing to all,* but *it fully avails only for believers in Jesus Christ.* The same thought is set forth in another way in 1 Tim. 4:10:

> "God . . . is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe."

While the propitiation made by Jesus Christ on the cross secures salvation in the fullest sense only for those who accept Him Who made the propitiation, it secures the possibility of salvation, and it secures also merciful dealing, for all, even while they are rejecting the propitiation. If, however, men persist in rejecting the propitiation it will ultimately bring the greater

condemnation upon their heads. God clearly declares this in Heb. 10:28, 29:

> "A man that hath set at nought Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of *how much sorer punishment,* think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

So we see that that which was intended for a blessing becomes a curse to men through their own abuse of it, as does every blessing of God when abused.

John the Baptist taught the same great truth that is found in 1 Jno. 2:2 in a little different form in Jno. 1:29:

> "On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, that *taketh away the sin of the world!*"

The Death of Jesus Christ took the sins of the world out of the way, so that a clear way to God and to pardon and eternal life was opened for everybody, even for the vilest sinner or the most outrageous infidel and blasphemer. The tense of the verb translated "taketh away" in this passage is the present tense and denotes a continuous action, that is to say, that Jesus Christ's Death continuously takes away the sin of the world so that the way to God and pardon is kept open for all.

(3) But even this is not all that the Death of Jesus Christ secures for every member of the human race. *By the Death of Jesus Christ justification of life comes*

to all men. Paul speaking in the Holy Spirit, plainly declares this in Rom. 5:18:

> "So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation: even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came *unto all men* to *justification of life.*" (R.V.)

The "one act of righteousness" spoken of in the Revised Version, which is the correct translation of this verse, is clearly shown by the context to be that act of righteousness which our Lord Jesus performed by offering Himself in obedience to God as an atoning sacrifice when He laid down His life as an atoning sacrifice for sin on the cross. And we are here told that just as every descendant of Adam by Adam's sin in Eden received condemnation unto death and so all died (vs. 15), even so also the free gift "to justification of life" "came unto all men" through Christ's Death on Calvary. Complete justification is *provided* for all men by the Death of Christ, and, *if we appropriate it by simply believing in Him Who died as our Substitute, that complete justification becomes ours.* As Paul puts it two chapters back in Rom. 3:23-26:

> "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; *being justified freely* by His grace *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:* Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in His blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just, and the *Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.*"

But while complete justification, i.e., the putting of God's perfect righteousness in Jesus Christ to our account, comes only to the believer, "justification *of life,*" that is resurrection from the dead, comes to every member of the Adamic race, believer and unbeliever, through Christ's Death.

Paul puts this same thought in another way in 1 Cor. 15:21, 22:

> "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as *in Adam all die,* so also in Christ shall *all be made alive.*"

God here plainly tells us that "as" every descendant of Adam lost life by Adam's sin in Eden, "so also" every descendant of Adam gets back in Christ's Death what they lost in Adam's sin, they get life again, they get resurrection from the dead. Listen to it again and try to take in the force of every word.

> "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as *in Adam all die,* so also in Christ shall *all be made alive.*"

Years ago I thought this passage taught universal salvation, and it is often so used by others even to this day; but when I came to study the passage more closely in its context and in the light of other passages in God's Book, I found out that what it really taught (and all that it taught) was that all that all men get through Christ's Death was just what it says, *"life," physical life, resurrection from the dead.* The whole chapter in which this passage is found has just one subject and that is, *the resurrection of the body,* and that is exactly what all men get through Jesus Christ's Death for all. All men lost life in Adam, physical

life, and all men get life (physical life, resurrection from the dead) back again in Christ; *the Death of Jesus Christ avails to secure resurrection from the dead for every member of the human race,* believers and unbelievers. *Every one who dies in Adam gets resurrection from the dead in Jesus Christ.* Whether or not the resurrection we get in Jesus Christ shall be a resurrection unto "life" in its fullest sense, or a resurrection unto "condemnation," "shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:3; Jno. 5:28, 29), depends entirely upon what attitude the individual takes towards Jesus Christ Who obtained this resurrection for him.

Let me call attention in passing to the fact that there is a large measure of truth in the teaching of what is called "Conditional Immortality." The teaching of "Conditional Immortality" is, that life is in Christ alone, that men are naturally mortal and it is only in Christ that they get life. From this they draw the conclusion that those who do not accept Christ will be annihilated—or cease to have conscious existence. The premise is correct, but the conclusion is unwarranted. It is true that life is in Christ and in Christ alone, *but all men get life in Christ,* believers and unbelievers, or as the Word of God puts it "As in Adam all die so also in Christ *shall all be made alive.*" So we see clearly that the conclusion of "Conditional Immortality," which is what they particularly emphasize, that all who do not accept Christ shall be annihilated, or cease to have conscious existence, is not warranted by their premises. Every man gets resurrection from the dead in Jesus Christ, but as we have already said, whether it is a "resurrection unto life" in its fullest

sense or "unto" condemnation, "shame and everlasting contempt" depends entirely upon the attitude the individual takes towards Jesus Christ through Whom He obtains resurrection from the dead.

As our Lord Jesus Himself puts it in Jno. 5:28, 29:

> "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the *resurrection of life;* and they that have done evil, unto the *resurrection of judgment.*"

2. Now let us consider, THE RESULTS OF CHRIST'S DEATH IN RELATION TO THE BELIEVER. These are very many and very wonderful and we cannot take them all up here. I have gone into the matter in detail in my book, "What the Bible Teaches." Here we will consider only the more important and outstanding results of Christ's Death in relation to the Believer.

(1) In the first place, *Every believer in Jesus Christ is redeemed from the curse of the law of God, which we have all broken.* This we are told in Gal. 3:13:

> "Christ *redeemed us from the curse of the law,* having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Note carefully the *"us"* in this verse. The "us" means believers in Christ. *For every believer in Christ the penalty of the broken law of God has been fully paid and forever paid by Christ in His death on the cross, and the broken law of God has no longer any claim whatever upon him.* Oh, I am so glad. When I study the holy law of God and see how far, how

very far short I have come of perfectly keeping it, and when I see how it pronounces a curse upon every one who does not perfectly keep it, I would be filled with horror and dismay if it were not for God's own clear testimony in this Book, that Christ "redeemed me from the curse of the law" by taking that curse upon Himself, by dying on the tree. In the light of that glorious fact instead of being filled with dismay, I am filled with peace and joy and glory. (Cf. Rom. 8: 1, R.V.)

(2) In the second place, *By the atoning Death of Jesus Christ believers in Him who were once enemies are now reconciled to God.* This God tells us in Rom. 5: 10:

> "For if, while we were enemies, we were *reconciled to God through the death of His Son,* much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life."

All enmity between God and the sinner is done away with, for every sinner who has believed on Jesus Christ. *It has already* been done away with: Christ *hath made* peace through the blood of His cross: *He hath* reconciled believers in the body of His flesh through death. This we are told even more definitely in Col. 1: 20-22:

> "And through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, *having made peace through the blood of His cross;* through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens. And *you,* being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now *hath He reconciled* in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreproveable before Him."

The story is told of a faithful Church of England vicar who heard that one of his parishioners was very ill and near to death. He called upon this dying saint. He said to her, "They tell me you are very ill." "Yes," she said, "I am." He gently continued, "They tell me you have but a short time to live." "Yes," she said, "I know I have but a few hours to live." Then earnestly but gently he said, "Have you made your peace with God?" "No," the dying saint replied, "I have not made my peace with God." "What?" said the astonished vicar. "Do you realize how near you are to death, that you probably will not live another day?" "Yes, I realize that." "And you have not made your peace with God?" "No." "And are you not afraid to meet God?" "No," she replied, "not in the least." There was something about the calmness and serenity of the woman's manner that made the vicar think there must be something underneath her words that he did not understand, and he said, "What do you mean?" She replied, "I have not made my peace with God. I have no intention of making my peace with God and yet I am not the least afraid to meet God; for I am resting in the peace which Jesus Christ made eighteen centuries ago when He died upon the cross of Calvary in my place." Yes, thank God, by His Death on the cross Jesus Christ *"made peace through the blood of His cross"* and we do not have to make our peace with God, but simply to accept and rest in the peace which He made nearly nineteen hundred years ago.

(3) In the third place, *Through the shedding of Christ's blood, through His atoning death on the cross*

of Calvary believers in Him have redemption, the forgiveness of their sins. This we are told in Eph. 1:7:

> "In Whom *we have* our redemption *through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,* according to the riches of His grace."

Forgiveness is not something which believers have to do something to secure: it is something that has already been secured by the Blood shed upon the cross and all we have to do is to appropriate by faith what the blood of Jesus Christ, His atoning Death, has already secured.

(4) In the fourth place, *By (or, "in") the blood of Christ, His atoning Death, all believers in Him are justified.* This, God declares to us through His servant Paul in Rom. 5:9:

> "Much more then, *being now justified by His blood,* we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."

We not only get *forgiveness* of all our sins through the Death of Christ, we also get *justification.*

Justification means far more than mere forgiveness of sin. Forgiveness is negative, the putting away of sin: justification is positive, the reckoning righteous. By reason of Christ's Death there is a complete interchange of positions between Christ and the believer: in His Death on the cross Christ takes our place, the place of the curse, the place of condemnation before God, and the moment we believe in Him we take His place, the place of perfect acceptance before God. Paul brings this out in a way that would amaze us if we were not so familiar with it.

2 Cor. 5:21:

"Him Who knew no sin He (that is God) made to be sin on our behalf; that *we might become* the righteousness of God in Him."

When Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross He hung where I belonged. He gave up His place of perfect acceptance before God and took my place of condemnation and curse before God, and the moment I accept Him I step into His place of perfect acceptarce before God. As it is put in that familiar couplet,

"Near, so very near, to God,
Nearer I cannot be,
For in the Person of His Son,
I am just as near as He.

Dear, so very dear, to God,
Dearer I cannot be,
For in the Person of His Son,
I am just as dear as He."

All this is on the ground of the atoning death of Jesus Christ.

(5) In the fifth place, *Because of Christ's Death no one can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, i.e., believers in Jesus Christ.* This we are told in Rom. 8:33, 34:

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? *It is Christ Jesus that died,* yea, rather, that was raised from the dead, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us."

There is absolutely no condemnation to any one who is in Christ Jesus. The substitutionary Death of Jesus Christ has settled all condemnation forever for every believer. As we read in the first verse of this eighth chapter of Romans:

> "There is therefore *now no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus."

(6) In the sixth place, *By the Death of Jesus Christ the whole church and each individual believer in it was purchased unto God, and so we are now His own property.* We are told this in a number of passages of Scripture. Take just one illustration, Rev. 5:9, 10:

> "And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and *didst purchase unto God with Thy blood* men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth."

Every believer belongs to God. He is God's property. God has purchased us at the price of the blood shed in the atoning Death of His Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross of Calvary. Neither the Devil, nor the world, nor we ourselves, have any claim upon us. There is great comfort in this thought, for if we are God's property we are secure; for God is certainly able to take perfect care of His own property.

The story is told of a godly slave in the antebellum days whose master was a godless man who often tried to confuse and perplex the slave. One day his master asked him, "Sam, what would you do if the Devil should get after you?" and the godly slave replied, "I

would simply look up into God's face and say, 'Massa, look out for your own property.' " And God will look out for His own property; and, as the blood of Jesus Christ has made us God's property, I know I am perfectly secure.

(7) In the seventh place, *Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, i.e., by His atoning Death, all believers in Him are sanctified.* This, God tells us in Heb. 10:10:

> "By which will (that is the will of God) *we have been sanctified* through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

We are here told that every believer in Jesus Christ is already sanctified, that is, that the sacrifice of Christ sets him apart for God. Sanctification in this sense is not something we must do something to secure: it is something that the blood of Jesus Christ has already secured for every believer in Him. *The blood of Christ separates the believer from the world* (cp. Ex. 11:7; Ex. 12:13) *and separates him unto God.* It is our part to live out in our daily life this separation between us and the world and separation unto God which already exists by virtue of Christ's Death on the cross. As far as our standing before God is concerned we are already sanctified, but we need to realize in our state that which is already true in our standing.

(8) In the eighth place, *By one offering, i.e., by the offering of His own life on the cross Jesus Christ perfected forever* them that are sanctified, i.e., *all believers* (see verse 10). This we are told in Heb. 10:14:

> "For *by one offering* He (that is Jesus Christ) *hath perfected forever* them that are sanctified."

The question inevitably arises, In what sense have all believers already been made perfect? The answer to the question is found in verses one and two of this same chapter. Believers in Christ are made perfect *in their standing before God: by the Death of Christ the believer is forever cleansed from all guilt.* He need have no more consciousness of sins; the blood removes all guilt; all the believer's guilt is put away forever by the one all sufficient sacrifice. There is nothing that we can do to add to that perfect atoning work and there is nothing that we need to do: it is already done.

(9) In the ninth place, *The blood of Christ cleanses the conscience of the believer from dead works to serve the living God.* This we are told in Heb. 9: 14:

> "How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, *cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"*

Not only does the blood of Jesus Christ relieve the conscience of the believer from all the burden of guilt: it also relieves the conscience of the believer from all his self efforts to atone for sin or please God (which are here called "dead works"). Sin is seen in the Death of Christ as entirely settled by that perfect sacrifice, and now the believer has a conscience free from all guilt and also free from the burden of all his self efforts after righteousness, his own imperfect works, and enters into the service of the living God in the liberty and power of sonship (cf. Rom. 8: 15).

There are many to-day who call themselves Christians, who have not permitted the blood of Christ to

cleanse their conscience from "dead works." They are constantly under the burden of *doing something* to atone for sin and to commend them to God. But we have nothing to do: it is all already done, the blood of Jesus Christ has forever commended us to God (2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:21, 22).

There are three classes of men: first, Those who are not burdened by sin but love it; second, Those who are burdened by sin and seek to get rid of the burden by their own self-efforts, by doing penances or by saying many prayers or by doing some kind of righteous acts, doing something to atone for sin and to commend them to God, "dead works." No peace can ever be found along this line, nor real love to God, nor service for God; third, Those who believe in Christ and His atoning blood and really believe what God says about the blood, and therefore see their sins settled forever by the Death of Christ (as God says they are), and who therefore have a conscience cleansed from both guilt *and "dead works,"* the hearts of all such are filled with love to God and they *"serve the living God,"* not in the fear of punishment, but in the freedom of love born of a faith in the cleansing and perfecting blood. They serve God not in order to atone for sin, but out of a great gratitude that all their sins are already perfectly atoned for.

(10) In the tenth place, *By His Death upon the cross, Jesus Christ has "blotted out" and "taken away" and "nailed to the cross" the Mosaic law.* This God tells us through the apostle Paul in Col. 2:14:

> "Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us (which is, of course,

the Mosaic law), which was contrary to us: and He hath taken it out of the way, *nailing it to the cross.*"

Not only has the curse which the law imposed upon the breaker of it, been settled by the Death of Christ, but the law, itself, has been done away with by the Death of Christ. As Paul puts it in 2 Cor. 3:7, 11:

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones (this must include the ten commandments which were the only part of the law engraven on stones), came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: . . . (11) For if that which passeth *away* was with glory (that is the Mosaic law), much more that which remaineth is in glory."

The meaning of these verses is unmistakable if we are to take God's Word at its face value: Christ has settled all the claims of the law, fulfilled the law, and so done away with it as far as the believer in Christ is concerned. As Paul puts it in another place, Rom. 10:4:

"Christ is *the end of the law* unto righteousness *to every one that believeth.*"

This does not mean for a moment that the one who believes in Jesus Christ is at liberty to do the things the ten commandments command him not to do. It means that he is no longer governed by a law outside of him, but by the law of God written in his heart by the Holy Spirit, and his obligation to keep the things written in the law is not to the law but to Jesus Christ,

the new Husband. Paul puts it this way in Rom. 7: 1-4, 6:

> "Are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men who know the law), that the law *hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth?* For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, *while the husband liveth,* she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, *she is free from the law,* so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be *joined to Another,* even to Him Who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. . . . (6) But now *we have been discharged from the law,* having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter."

That is, we serve in the power of the Holy Spirit within us Who leads us and empowers us to gladly do the things that are commanded in the law and we are no longer governed merely by the letter of the law without, but by the living Spirit within us. We are no longer debtors to a *law* but to a *Person,* even to Jesus Christ Himself. We are made dead to the law through the crucified body of Jesus Christ, to enter into a higher obligation to do the things that are according to the will of God as revealed in His Word, because of our union with Him Who arose from the dead.

I have collated in all twenty-five Results of the Death of Jesus Christ in relation to the believer, but we will stop here on the tenth, the complete number.

3. Now let us consider, THE RESULTS OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST IN RELATION TO THE DEVIL AND THE POWERS OF DARKNESS. These too are very wonderful and are calculated to fill our hearts with joy.

(1) First of all, *Through Christ's Death the casting out of the Prince of this world* (*i.e., the Devil*) *is secured.* This we are told in Jno. 12:31:

> "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

The context shows that it is because of Christ's Death that the Prince of this world, the Devil, is cast out. Since Christ's Death Satan is a usurper, whose ultimate dethronement is secured. The dethronement is an already accomplished fact as far as God's work is concerned, though it is not yet outwardly manifested and will not be until the return of our Lord.

(2) In the second place, *Through the Death of Jesus Christ the Devil is brought to nought, or rendered inoperative.* This we are told in Heb. 2:14, R.V.:

> "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that *through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*"

The Greek word translated "destroy" in the A.V. and "bring to nought" in the R.V. means literally to "render idle or inoperative," "to cause a person or thing to have no further efficiency; to deprive of force,

influence or power." The Death of Jesus Christ was the death knell of Satan's power. He could no longer wield the power of death over those who appropriated to themselves the redeeming power that there is in Christ's Death.

(3) In the third place, *In the Death of Christ on the cross God triumphed over the principalities and the powers and exposed them to open disgrace.* This we are told in Col. 2: 14, 15:

> "Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; *having despoiled the principalities and the powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it*" (that is, in the Cross).

As to what the principalities and powers that are mentioned in this verse are, see Eph. 6: 12:

> "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the *principalities,* against the *powers,* against the *world-rulers of this darkness,* against the *spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*"

Evidently the principalities and powers are Satan and his hosts. It was in the cross of Christ that God fought the decisive battle, and won the decisive victory over the Devil. When Jesus Christ died upon the cross it seemed to be the moment of Satan's greatest victory, but it was in reality the moment of his most overwhelming defeat. From that moment he has been a conquered foe. He is allowed for some wise purpose of God to still exercise a measure of power, but he is defeated and doomed: in the cross of Christ

God celebrated a triumph over him. The whole meaning of this conflict and victory at the cross will be, I believe, a subject for our contemplation and wonder at the manifold wisdom of God throughout the ages of the eternal world.

4. We come now to a consideration of THE RESULTS OF THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST IN RELATION TO THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE. It has never occurred to many of us, unless we have made a deep and careful study of the subject, that the Death of Christ affects the material universe at all. We know His Death has results as regards man, and we may know that His Death has results regarding the Devil and the powers of darkness arrayed under him, but we have not even dreamed that His Death has any results regarding the material universe. But this wonderful Book declares that it has far reaching results regarding even the material universe. What are those results? This question is plainly answered in the Word of God where we are taught that, *Through the Death of Jesus Christ "all things," the entire material universe ("all things whether they be things in earth or things in heaven"), are reconciled unto God.* This we are told in Col. 1 : 19, 20:

> "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him (that is, in Jesus Christ) should all the fullness dwell; and through Him to *reconcile all things* unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, *whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.*"

The Bible tells us that the entire material universe

has fallen away from God in connection with sin. It tells us in Rom. 8:20, 21:

> "For the creation (that is, the material creation) was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

The same thing is hinted at away back in the first book of the Bible, Gen. 3:18. Not earth only but heaven also has been invaded by sin. We read in Eph. 6:12:

> "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness *in the heavenly places.*"

And we also read in Heb. 9:23, 24:

> "It was necessary therefore that the *copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed* with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but *into heaven itself,* now to appear before the face of God for us."

Through the Death of Christ, this pollution of heaven as well as the earth through sin, is to be put away. Just as the blood of the Old Testament sacrifices was taken into the Most Holy Place (which is the type of heaven), Christ has taken the blood of His own better sacrifice into heaven itself and cleansed it. "All things . . . whether they be things in earth, or *things in heaven*" are now reconciled to God.

Paul tells us that "the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21), and Peter tells us that "we look for a *new heaven* and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13).

The atonement of Christ has an immense sweep, far beyond the reach of our petty human philosophies. We have only begun to understand what the blood that was spilt on Calvary means. On the one hand, we see that sin is a far more awful, ruinous and far reaching evil than we have been wont to think; but, on the other hand, we see that the blood of Christ has a power and efficacy, the fullness of which only eternity will disclose.

Here we close our study of the "Death of the Christ" as set forth in God's Word, but we are far from having said all the Bible says on this question of such fundamental importance in present day thinking and in the thinking of every age. Again we see what a wonderful book the Bible is and how widely its teachings vary from much that passes for advanced and profound thinking to-day, and how immeasurably it transcends the vain philosophies of this superficial age in which we live, an age in which not only "silly women," but supposedly scholarly men, renowned scientists, philosophers and theologians, are befuddled by the alcoholic vapors of their own boot-leg philosophical booze. But the profound and lofty revelation of this old, but ever new and fresh, Word of God looms up serene, majestic and sublime above the mists and clouds that hang over the miasmatic swamps of twen-

tieth century dreamings. Much of the philosophical and theological thinking of our day is simply an exaggerated case of intellectual autointoxication.

I noticed in last Tuesday night's paper that a trust had been formed in the house of a well-known financier to rewrite the Bible, in order that it might conform to our present day thinking. Well, the man mentioned is an expert in forming trusts to corral all the material wealth in the world and turn it into a few already overinflated pockets, but he and his associates, in undertaking the improvement of this very ancient but still absolutely peerless Book that is always up to date and ahead of date, have undertaken a job as far beyond them as it would be beyond a bullfrog to swallow down the ocean. Like the other overinflated bullfrog of Æsop's fable, they will burst in the attempt.

But, turning away from these fatuous and foolhardy religious derelicts, let us fasten our eyes upon the cross of Christ as it is set before us in the imperishable Word of God, and also fasten our eyes upon Him Who died on that cross, and ponder what wondrous things that Death meant for all mankind, and especially for us who believe in Him, and also what it meant as to the complete overcoming of that dark world of gloom in which Satan reigns, and as to the whole material universe that fell in man's fall and that "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" in connection with man's redemption by the atoning blood of the Christ of God.

CHAPTER V

THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE: THE RESURRECTION OF THE CHRIST FROM THE DEAD

We shall consider in this chapter, The Christ of the Bible: the Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of the Bible, from the Dead. Ponder to begin with five passages from God's Word.

First, 2 Tim. 2:8:

> "*Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead,* of the seed of David, according to my gospel."

Second, 1 Cor. 15:1-4:

> "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the Word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried; *and that He hath been raised* on the third day according to the scriptures."

Third, Acts 1:15, 21, 22:

> "And in these days Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren, and said (and there was a multitude of persons gathered together, about a hundred and twenty), . . . (21, 22) Of the men therefore that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among

us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that He was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us *of His resurrection.*"

Fourth, Acts 2:29-36:

"Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would set One upon his throne; he foreseeing this *spake of the resurrection of the Christ,* that neither was He left unto Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. *This Jesus did God raise up,* whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord,
Sit thou on my right hand,
Till I make thine enemies the footstool
of thy feet.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified."

Fifth, Acts 17:30, 31:

"The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the

world in righteousness by the Man Whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, *in that He hath raised Him from the dead.*"

These verses do not contain all that we have to say upon this subject, but simply give the keynote of what we have to say, but I shall say nothing that is not plainly taught in these verses or in other verses from God's Own Word that I cite to you as we proceed. I shall not tell you merely what I guess about the Resurrection, or even merely what I think about the Resurrection. That might be interesting and that is what many are doing to-day; but I shall do something vastly more worth while, and that is, I will show you *what God Himself plainly and unmistakably says about The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.* We shall not take up here The Certainty of the fact of His Resurrection. I have done that already in various books, and have clearly shown that the evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead is overwhelmingly convincing, so convincing indeed that *no man who really desires to know and obey the truth, can carefully and thoroughly study this evidence without being fully convinced that the body of Jesus was raised from the dead just as is recorded in the four Gospels.*

But to-day we shall not consider the Certainty of His Resurrection, but what God tells us in His Own Word regarding it. We shall consider first, The Importance of His Resurrection; second, The Manner of His Resurrection; third, The Results of His Resurrection.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

First of all then, let us look at what God says in His Own Word regarding the Importance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1. In the first place, *We see the Importance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ in the fact that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead is mentioned directly a hundred and four or more times in the two hundred and sixty chapters of the New Testament.* Some of the passages that mention it cover many verses and even whole chapters.

2. In the second place, *We see the Importance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ in the fact that the apostles made the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead the most prominent point in all their testimony and the very center of all their teaching and preaching.* Let me cite a part of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, the very heart of his argument, Acts 2:24, 27-36:

> "*Whom God raised up,* having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. . . . (27-32)
>
> Because Thou *wilt not leave my soul unto Hades,*
> *Neither wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption.*
> Thou madest known unto me the ways of life;
> Thou shalt make me full of gladness with Thy countenance.
>
> Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the

patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would set One upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was He left unto Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. *This Jesus did God raise up,* whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord,
Sit Thou on My right hand,
Till I make thine enemies the footstool
of thy feet.

Let all the house of Israel *therefore* (that is because God raised up Christ) know assuredly, that God *hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified.*"

Peter's whole sermon on the Day of Pentecost turned upon the fact of the Resurrection of the body of Jesus, the Christ of God, from the dead. Peter bases all his reasoning upon that fact of which he says he himself was a personal witness, having seen Jesus with his own eyes after His Resurrection from the Dead.

We have a summary of the teaching and continuous teaching of the apostles when they were filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts 4: 31, 33:

> "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the Word of God with boldness. . . . (33) And with great power gave the apostles their witness *of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*"

Now listen to the climax of Peter's sermon in the household of Cornelius, the part to which all that he had said before had been leading up, the fact upon which he based his closing statement that to Christ Jesus "bare all the prophets witness, that *through His Name* every one that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). Read carefully what precedes this remarkable statement, Acts 10:38-43:

> "Even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And *we are witnesses* of all things which He did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; Whom also they slew, hanging Him on a tree. Him *God raised up the third day,* and gave Him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, *even to us, who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.* And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that *this is He* Who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. *To Him* bear all the prophets witness, that *through His Name* every one that believeth *on Him* shall receive remission of sins."

Now look at Paul's sermon in Antioch, the climax of that sermon and the point on which Paul bases his glorious statement in verses thirty-eight and thirty-nine, "Be it known unto you *therefore,* brethren, *that through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things,* from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Listen to Paul's argument, Acts 13:32-39:

> "And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers, that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, *in that He raised up Jesus;* as also it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. And as concerning that He *raised Him up from the dead,* now no more to return to corruption, He hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. *Because He saith* also in another Psalm, *Thou wilt not give Thy Holy One to see corruption.* For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but *He Whom God raised up* saw no corruption. Be it known unto you *therefore* (that is, *because God raised Him up*), brethren, that through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Listen to Paul's sermon at the Areopagus, the most celebrated center of Greek philosophy in Paul's day, and to an audience almost wholly composed of phi-

losophers, Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, Acts 17: 17, 18, 19, 22, 30, 31:

> "So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the market-place every day with them that met him. And certain also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, What would this babbler say? others, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because *he preached Jesus and the resurrection.* And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee? . . . (22) And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said . . . (30, 31) The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man Whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, *in that He hath raised Him from the dead.*"

We could easily multiply illustrations, but instead of doing that let me make this statement (that you can verify for yourself) that *every sermon recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, without a single exception, centers in the fact of the Resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead.* Furthermore, when it was seen to be necessary to fill up the full quota of the twelve disciples by the choice of one to supply the place which the betrayal and tragic death of Judas

Iscariot had left vacant, Peter said, as recorded in Acts 1:21, 22:

> "Of the men therefore that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that He was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us *of His resurrection.*"

It is evident then that the central and the most fundamental thing in the apostolic testimony was their testimony to the Resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead. The one who is perhaps the most influential teacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church today is Prof. Franklin Harris Rall. Every candidate for the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church is required to study two of his books. It is true the last General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted by an overwhelming majority to put these two extremely dangerous books out of the course, but the Board of Bishops, in utter contempt for this decision of the General Conference, have put the books back into the course. Professor Rall says in one of these books, *"Nor is it important* to answer the second question" (that is, the question as to the manner of the Resurrection), and he goes on to say, "The *only* issue is whether we believe *in the reality of the spiritual world."* Now evidently either Professor Rall has not carefully read the Acts of the Apostles and studied the sermons of the Apostles as therein recorded, or else he makes bold to set up his own opinion against theirs. At the close of his paragraph Professor Rall says,

"The *one* clear fact without which the wonderful story of early Christianity is a mere riddle, is the fact that these disciples were following a *living Lord,* and not a dead and defeated Leader." This statement of Professor Rall's is utterly untrue. The *"one fact"* that is "clear" as day to any one who studies his Bible to find out what it really teaches and not merely to make it fit into his own unbelieving or heretical notions, is that the Apostles and other early Christian disciples "were following a Lord" Who was not only *"a living Lord,"* but One Who was "living" *because His once dead body had been raised from the dead.* THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD WAS THE VERY CENTER AND HEART OF ALL THE APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY AND PREACHING. It is evident from all that we have just read from the Bible that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ had a prominence and importance in New Testament teaching that it has not in most of our modern preaching. It is the one fact upon which the apostles were constantly ringing the changes.

3. In the third place, *We see the Importance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from Paul's clear and definite statement that there are just two fundamental facts in the Gospel and that one of those two fundamental facts is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* You will find this statement in 1 Cor. 15: 1, 3, 4:

> "Now I make known unto you, brethren, *the gospel which I preached unto you,* which also ye received, wherein also ye stand. . . . (3, 4)

For *I delivered unto you* first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried; *and* that *He hath been raised on the third day* according to the scriptures."

These two facts constitute the Good News (or, the Gospel): the first fact of the two facts is the one that we studied in the fourth chapter, the fact that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was buried; and the second of these two all important facts is, that *He was raised on the third day.* Gospel preachers in these days preach the Gospel of the crucifixion of Christ, His atoning death; but the apostles preached also *the Gospel of the Resurrection from the dead of that Christ Who was nailed to the cross.*

The crucifixion loses its meaning without the Resurrection. Without the Resurrection the death of Jesus Christ would become nothing more than the heroic death of a noble martyr; but with His Resurrection from the dead, it becomes the atoning death of the Son of God. The Resurrection shows that the death of Jesus was of sufficient value to cover all our sins because it was the sacrifice of One Whom God Himself attested to be His Son. In the Resurrection from the Dead of Him Who died upon the cross for us, we have an all-sufficient ground for knowing that our blackest sin is atoned for. My sin may be as high as the highest mountain, but the sacrifice that covers it is as high as the highest heaven. My guilt may be as deep as the ocean, but the atonement that swallows it up is as deep as eternity.

4. In the fourth place, *We see the Importance of*

the Resurrection of Christ Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, in that Paul tells us that the one great fact to be remembered about Jesus Christ as the very heart of His Gospel was that He rose from the dead. This we read in 2 Tim. 2:8:

> "Remember Jesus Christ, *risen from the dead,* of the seed of David, *according to my Gospel.*"

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ was the one great fact about his Gospel that Paul wished Timothy never to lose sight of. God grant that none of us shall ever lose sight of it.

5. In the fifth place, *We see the Importance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in that the Christian faith stands or falls with the Resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead: if He did not rise from the dead, Christian preaching is empty and the Christian faith forceless and useless.* This Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 15:14, 17:

> "And *if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain,* your faith also is vain. . . . (17) and *if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain;* ye are yet in your sins."

There is no escaping the significance of these "God-breathed" words of Paul. They declare in the plainest possible kind of language that the Christian faith stands or falls with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that if He did not rise from the dead, then all Christian preaching is "empty" and the Christian faith is "forceless" and "useless."

The two different Greek words used in these two verses and translated, in each case, "vain," mean "empty" and "forceless" (or, "useless"). If the body

of Jesus Christ was not raised from the dead, then the Christian faith must go and the preaching of Christ it utterly "empty." The Devil knows that as well as we do and we see his subtility and rare cunning at the present time in his inducing so many young preachers to give up believing in or preaching the Resurrection of the body of Jesus. On the other hand, as we shall see later, IF JESUS CHRIST DID RISE FROM THE DEAD, AS BEYOND AN HONEST AND INTELLIGENT DOUBT HE DID, CHRISTIAN PREACHING AND CHRISTIAN FAITH RESTS UPON A SOLID FOUNDATION OF IMPREGNABLE FACT. Christian faith is no longer a mere theological speculation, but a certainty demonstrated by an indisputable fact.

6. In the sixth place, *We see the fundamental and unmeasurable Importance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in the fact that the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has power to save any one who believes it with the heart.* This Paul tells us in very simple, easily understood but deeply significant language in Rom. 10:9, 10:

> *"If thou shalt* confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt *believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead,* thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

We are here told that there is one truth and only one that a man needs to believe in order to be saved and that that one truth is that God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. This truth, however, of the

Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead carries with it a great many other truths. Indeed it carries with it every essential doctrine of Christianity. Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and you are logically forced to believe in every essential truth of the Christian faith.

It must be clear to any person of intelligence and candor, from what we have said, that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is one of the most important of all the facts about the Christ of Whom God tells us in His Own Word and that *any one who preaches any other Christ than the One Whose body was raised from the dead, is preaching an entirely different Christ from the Christ of the Bible.*

II. THE MANNER OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD.

We come now to a consideration of the Manner of the Resurrection of the Christ of the Bible. Here again the Bible is unmistakably clear.

1. In the first place, *Jesus Christ did not raise Himself from the dead, but God raised Him from the dead by the working of the strength of His might.* This we are told for example, in Acts 2:24, 32:

> "Whom *God raised up,* having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. . . . (32) This Jesus *did God raise up,* whereof we all are witnesses."

We are told again in Acts 10:40:

> "Him *God raised up* the third day, and gave Him to be made manifest."

Paul tells us the same thing in Rom. 10:9:

"God raised Him from the dead."

And Paul tells us this again in Eph. 1:19, 20:

"And what the exceeding greatness of His (i.e., God's) power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when *He raised Him from the dead,* and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places."

It is not so much that Jesus Christ arose by the power of a life that dwelt in Him as that God raised Him up by an exercise of His power from without. It was God Who put forth the might, it was God Who "loosed the pangs of death." Jesus Christ was raised by an act of power from without and not by the fullness of life within. He laid down His life to the fullest extent. He was dead, utterly dead, there was never a deader man in all this world's history than He was; and it took the strength of God's might to raise Him up.

2. In the second place as regards the Manner of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ was of such a character that after His Resurrection from the dead He had a real Body: He had hands and feet, flesh and bones and all the appearance of a man, and after His Resurrection He ate and drank.* We are told this over and over again in the various accounts of His Resurrection and in numerous references to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ found in the Bible. For example, we are told in John 20:27:

"Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy

finger, and *see My hands;* and reach hither thy hand, and put it *into My side:* and be not faithless, but believing."

We read in Acts 10:40, 41:

"Him God raised up the third day, and *gave Him to be made manifest,* not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who *ate and drank with Him,* after He rose from the dead."

Now turn to Luke's account of the Resurrection, Luke 24:41-43:

"And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish. And *He took it, and ate before them.*"

We read in the twenty-ninth verse of the same chapter:

"And they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And *He went in to abide with them.*"

Now read Luke 24:15, 18:

"And it came to pass while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus Himself *drew near,* and went with them. . . . (18) And one of them, named Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Dost Thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days?"

John tells us in Jno. 20:14, 15:

"And when she (that is, Mary Magdalene) had

thus said, she turned herself back, and *beholdeth Jesus standing,* and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing *Him to be the gardener,* saith unto Him, Sir, if Thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where Thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away."

And we read in the two descriptions of His last appearance to His disciples before His ascension into Heaven in Luke 24:50, 51:

"And He led them out until they were over against Bethany: and He *lifted up His hands,* and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He parted from them, and was *carried up into heaven,"*

and Acts 1:9:

"And when He had said these things, *as they were looking,* He was taken up; and a *cloud received Him out of their sight."*

Evidently and beyond all honest question the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was entirely different from the shadowy appearances of the dead in the alleged materializations of the spirits of the dead as exploited by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or any of the most expert modern mediums. The latter are well named *"mediums."* They are mediums, medium between the Devil and his dupes. Thank God the believer in the Christ of the Bible is not dependent upon a degenerate *medium* but has a *Divine Mediator,* the Resurrected Man in the glory.

3. In the third place, as regards the Manner of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, *The Resurrection of*

Jesus Christ was a Resurrection of the very Body that was nailed to the cross and died and was afterwards taken down from the cross and laid in Joseph's tomb, but was preserved from corruption and was raised from the dead and passed out of the tomb, leaving the sepulchre empty, and after the Resurrection still had the print of the nails in His hands and the hole left by the spear in His side. That is, the same Body that was crucified was raised. This, the Bible declares repeatedly in terms that cannot be mistaken or misunderstood by any one who really desires to know the truth and not merely to bolster up a theory framed up by his own misguided imagination.

Read Acts 2:22-32:

> "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, *ye* by the hand of lawless men *did crucify* and slay: *Whom* God raised up, having *loosed the pangs of death:* because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David said concerning Him,
>
> I beheld the Lord always before my face;
> For He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
> Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
> Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope:

Because Thou *wilt not leave my soul unto Hades,*

Neither wilt Thou give Thy Holy One *to see corruption.*

Thou madest known unto me the ways of life;

Thou shalt make me full of gladness with Thy countenance.

Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins He would set One upon his throne; he foreseeing this *spake of the resurrection of the Christ,* that neither was He left unto Hades, nor *did His flesh see corruption.* This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses."

These verses tell us in the plainest possible terms that the Body of Jesus was crucified and afterwards taken down and laid in a tomb and preserved from corruption and that His Spirit went into Hades (not Hell, but Hades, the abode of the dead, righteous and unrighteous, until the ascension of Christ), but that the soul of Jesus was not left unto Hades but was brought back from Hades and that *His Body* was raised up, and soul *and Body* reunited. Read Matthew's account in Matt. 28: 5, 6:

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that *ye seek Jesus,* Who *hath been crucified.* He is not here;

for He is risen, even as He said. Come, *see the place where the Lord lay.*"

Here the angels tell the women at the tomb that *the thing that they were looking for* was not there. What were they looking for? Was it the spirit (or, soul) of Jesus? No, beyond a doubt *they were looking for the Body of Jesus* to embalm it. Then the angels go on to tell the women that *what had been there* was risen. What had been there? The spirit or soul of Jesus? No. It was the *Body of Jesus* that had been there. His soul had been in Hades and the angels say that *the Body* that had been there *had been raised,* and for that reason was there no longer, and they invited the women to come and inspect "the place where" *the Body* had lain.

There is no room here for the theory of Pastor Russell of Millennial Dawn fame, that the Body of Jesus was not raised but simply the spirit, and that the Body was either taken away and deposited somewhere for safe keeping or else evaporated into gases. Neither is there any room for the theory so widely taught in theological seminaries in America and in missionary universities in China and elsewhere, that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was not a Resurrection of His Body but a purely spiritual Resurrection, a Resurrection of His spirit. In order to believe that theory you must throw your Bibles into the fire. That would be far more honorable than to try to distort and twist the Bible's utterances and try to make the plain declarations of the Bible mean something they did not say, in order to fit in with one's own foolish imaginings. Now turn to Mark's account in Mark 16:5, 6:

"And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he saith unto them, Be not amazed: ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, Who hath been crucified: *He is risen; He is not here:* behold, *the place where they laid Him!*"

The meaning of these words is unmistakable. The angelic message reads, "Ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, Who hath been crucified." Now, what about Jesus was *"crucified"?* Certainly His Body. Then he goes on to say, "He *is risen;* He *is not here:* behold, *the place* where they laid Him!" What had been laid in that place that was now empty? Certainly the crucified *Body* of Jesus. And what was not there now? What was risen out of the place where it had lain? Beyond the possibility of an honest doubt or question, the *Body* of Jesus. THE ONLY RESURRECTION OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD, THAT THE BIBLE KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT OR TELLS ANYTHING ABOUT IS THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY OF JESUS, the Body that had been nailed to the cross, that had been taken down from the cross and laid in Joseph's tomb, the Body that had been laid in that very spot at which the women were now gazing, and which Body was no longer in that spot, or in the sepulchre. The only Resurrection of Jesus of which the Bible has one word to say is the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus, and those would-be wise men and the self-styled "modern scholars," who say they believe in the Resurrection of Jesus, but in a merely spiritual Resurrection and not a Resurrection of His Body, are believing in an un-

substantial chimera of their own disordered and befuddled fancies for which there is not one shred of evidence, and instead of being "modern scholars" and scientific and philosophical rationalists, they are in reality merely *modern empty dreamers* and *utterly bamboozled irrationalists,* credulously believing something for which there is not one smallest shred of historical evidence, or evidence of any other kind.

Now read Luke's account of the Resurrection of Jesus, the Christ of God, Luke 24: 3-7:

> "And they entered in, and *found not the body* of the Lord Jesus." (What is it we are here told that they found not? These are Luke's words, *"found not the body* of the Lord Jesus." That is plain English, isn't it? It is just as plain in the Greek). "And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel: and as they were affrighted and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? *He is not here,"* (What was not here? Verse three tells us that it was the body of the Lord Jesus that was not there). "He is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and *be crucified,* and the third day *rise again."*

The angel Himself said that what would rise again was what was *"crucified."* What was crucified? Certainly it was the Body of Jesus that was crucified. What the Bible teaches is as plain as day; and it is also

as plain as day that what the Bible teaches is not what these would-be "scientific" theologians who deny a Bodily Resurrection of Jesus and teach a merely spiritual Resurrection, teach. If it is true that "the modern mind can not believe in a Resurrection of the Body of Jesus, but does believe in a spiritual Resurrection of Jesus," then "the modern mind" is thoroughly and hopelessly unscientific.

Now turn to John's account of the Resurrection in John 20:24-27:

> "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands *the print of the nails,* and put my finger into *the print of the nails,* and put my hand *into His side,* I will not believe. And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach *hither thy finger,* and see *My hands;* and reach hither thy hand, and put it *into My side:* and be not faithless, but believing."

What was it that appeared in the room where Thomas and the rest were and that Jesus invited Thomas to investigate? Beyond a question, the Body of Jesus that had been crucified and that still bore the marks of the nails in His hands, and the spear thrust in the side. Each one of the four Gospels knew of no Resurrection except the Resurrection *of the Body* of Jesus, so that *it is as clear as language can make it,*

that the very Body that was nailed to the cross and afterwards taken down dead and laid in Joseph's tomb, was preserved from corruption and was raised from the dead and passed out of the tomb, leaving the sepulchre empty, and after the Resurrection still had the prints of the nails in the hands and still had the hole left by the spear in the side: that is to say, that it was the same Body that was crucified that was raised.

4. In the fourth place as regards the Manner of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, *There was so great a change in the Body of Jesus Christ after His Resurrection that it was not clearly recognizable at once even by His most intimate friends.* It was the same Body, but the Body was not the same, it was greatly altered. This we see from John 21:4, 12:

> "But when day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach: yet *the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.* . . . (12), Jesus saith unto them, Come and break your fast. And none of the disciples durst inquire of Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord."

The same thing is evident from Luke 24:15, 16, 30, 31:

> "And it came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus Himself drew near, and *went with them.* But *their eyes were holden that they should not know him.* . . . (30, 31) And it came to pass, when He sat down with them to meat, He took the bread and blessed; and breaking it He gave to them. And *their eyes were opened, and they knew Him;* and He vanished out of their sight."

5. In the fifth place as regards the Manner of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, *The Resurrection Body of Jesus Christ was of such a character that He could appear in a room when the doors were shut, and could become invisible. The Resurrection Body of Jesus was not subject to some of the limitations under which ordinary earthly human bodies now exist and act.* This is evident from Jno. 20:19, 26:

> "When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and *when the doors were shut* where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. . . . (26) And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them, Jesus cometh, *the doors being shut, and stood in the midst,* and said, Peace be unto you."

Read also Luke 24:31:

> "And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and *He vanished out of their sight.*"

The four Greek words translated "vanished out of their sight," in this verse mean literally, *"became invisible* from them."

6. In the sixth place as regards the Manner of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, *The Resurrection Body of Jesus Christ was of such a character that it could be taken up from the earth into Heaven in apparent defiance of the law of gravitation.* This we see in Acts 1:9-11:

> "And when He had said these things, as they were looking, He was *taken up;* and a cloud *received Him out of their sight.* And while they

were looking stedfastly into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, Who was *received up* from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven."

It is to be noted however, that we are not told that the body of Jesus ascended because of its own lightness, but it was *"taken up,"* and of course God could take up if He chose, an ordinary body. Indeed, we are told that "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11).

7. In the seventh place, as regards the Manner of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, *The Body that Jesus now has is a transformed Body, incorruptible, glorious, mighty, spiritual, heavenly, not flesh and blood.* This we see from a comparison of Phil. 3:20, 21 with 1 Cor. 15:42-50. Let me read Phil. 3:20, 21:

"For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that *it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.*"

Here we are told that our resurrection bodies are to be in the likeness of the Body of His glory, that is the Body He now has in the glory. So if we can find what the character of our resurrection body is to be we shall know just what the character of His Resurrection Body now is. The character of the resurrection bodies we are to have we are told in 1 Cor. 15:42-50:

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is

sown in corruption; it is *raised in incorruption:* it is sown in dishonor; it is *raised in glory:* it is sown in weakness; it is *raised in power:* it is sown a natural body; it is *raised a spiritual* body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is *of heaven.* As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that *are heavenly.* And as we have borne the image of the earthy, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* Now this I say, brethren, that *flesh and blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

While the Body of Jesus was not "flesh and blood," He Himself declared in Luke 24: 31-40 that it was "flesh and bones." His blood was shed on Calvary. The blood had been the life of His Body while on earth, just as our blood is the life of our bodies to-day, but at His resurrection His Spirit evidently became the life-giving and energizing power of His Body, and so shall it be with our glorified bodies at the resurrection of our bodies when our Lord comes again. Won't it be great to have a body that is energized by, and under the complete sway of our glorified spirits? and such we shall have when Jesus Christ comes again. And that is infinitely better than the airy "ectoplastic" ghosts of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's dopy dreamings.

Sir Arthur has been so long immersed in the imaginary career and mental acuteness of Sherlock Holmes that he seems to have become incapable of dealing with real facts, solid and substantial facts, and has lost all power of distinguishing between entertaining fiction and solid fact. A man or woman with an overvivid imagination, or who has overworked his imagination, is always an unreliable witness, and unless he is very much on his guard is likely to degenerate into a consummate liar. I have met in my life, some very painful illustrations of this fact, of people who in other ways were exceptionally fine people. But anyway, what need have we of Conan Doyle's fantastic fancies and weird and uncanny fantasies when we have the absolutely reliable and wonderfully inspiring (as well as undoubtedly inspired) records and revelations of the sure Word of God?

III. THE RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE CHRIST, OR WHAT DOES THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD PROVE?

We come now to a careful and thorough consideration of the vitally important question of the Results of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead; or, What Does the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead Prove?

1. In the first place, *The Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead provides a solid and unshakeable foundation of scientifically demonstrated historic fact for our belief in the existence of a personal God and that the God of the Bible, the God of*

both the Old Testament and of the New Testament, is the true God. This we are told in 1 Pet. 1:18-21:

> "Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ: Who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake, who through Him *are believers in God, that raised Him from the dead,* and gave Him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God."

Throughout at least twenty-five centuries of civilized history men have been looking for intellectually convincing, conclusive and decisive proofs of the existence and nature and character of God. They have devised the teleological argument, i.e., the argument from the marks of creative intelligence and design in the material universe, and also the historical argument, i.e., the argument from the many evidences of an intelligent and righteous guiding hand in human history, and the ontological argument, and other arguments. But all these arguments are philosophical in their character, and more or less speculative, and at the best they point only to the strong philosophical probability that there is a personal, righteous and beneficent God. But in the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead, we have an incontrovertible fact of history that demands the existence of God to account for it, and that points with scientific certainty to the existence,

power and holiness of the God Who raised Him. It is one of the most elementary and universally accepted principles of modern science that every effect must have an adequate cause, and the only cause that is adequate to account for the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead is God, the God of the Bible. By the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead, our faith in the existence of God is removed from the domain of the merely speculative and probable into the domain of the scientifically proven and certain.

Just how does the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead prove the existence of God and that *the God of the Bible, the God of the Old Testament as well as the God of the New Testament, is the true God?* In this way: when Jesus Christ was here on earth He proclaimed God, the God of the Bible, the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (as He constantly spoke of Him), the God of the Old Testament as well as of the New Testament. He unhesitatingly asserted that after He Himself had been put to death this God Whom He proclaimed, the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," the God of the Old Testament as well as of the New Testament, would raise Him from the dead the third day. This was indeed a stupendous claim to make. It was apparently an absurd claim. For centuries men had come and men had gone; they had lived for a longer or a shorter period on the earth and then had died, and as far as human observation went that was the end of them: and here one man after all these centuries of uniform experience, declared that His experience would be entirely different

from that of all the countless millions of others who had gone before Him. He claimed that He would live and die as others did, but that He, unlike all the rest, would be raised again, to die no more. This claim appeared like the height of absurdity; but as a matter of historic fact He did die, and as a fact of absolutely certain history His Body was raised from the dead, just as He had proclaimed that it would be. And this fact of the Resurrection of His Body from the dead demonstrated that the God Whom He proclaimed, the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," the God of the Old Testament as well as of the New Testament, existed and was indeed God, and was the true and only God as He constantly asserted that He was. In the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead, our belief in the existence of the God of the Bible is not merely a felicitous fancy or only a more or less probable theological guess; it is a firmly fixed faith resting upon an incontrovertibly firm fact: it is a well established scientific conviction. In the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead, atheism and agnosticism in all their forms have absolutely no standing ground, they are scientific absurdities.

Incidentally to this, the proven Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead sounds the death knell to any doctrine of Evolution that teaches that every new thing that comes to be is entirely the result of development by purely natural laws and processes (without any interference from without by a personal God) from the things that already were. Beyond the possibility of intelligent and honest doubt the Resur-

rection Body of Jesus Christ was not a development by natural law, by any inherent forces in the body that was crucified. The so-called "Modernist" in the theological world sees this very clearly, and that is the ultimate reason why these "Modernists" contend so vigorously against belief in the Virgin Birth of our Lord and against belief in the Resurrection of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. These "Modernists" are all committed irrevocably to an extreme doctrine of Evolution. Their whole reputation as thinkers and intelligent scholars depends upon the truth of that doctrine. If the Evolutionary Hypothesis falls, their reputation for scholarship and intelligence falls with it; and is forever shattered. They are committed to a doctrine of Evolution that rules out miracles and any interposition of God by the bringing in of any new and higher manifestations of God's power in nature or in man; and they see clearly that once prove the Virgin Birth of our Lord or the Resurrection of His Body from the dead and the whole Evolutionary Hypothesis collapses and falls in utter and hopeless ruin: it receives its death blow. But the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead is a conclusively demonstrated historic fact; and no mere theory, no matter how brilliant and fascinating that theory may be, and no matter how many great names it may summon to its support, can stand against scientifically demonstrated facts. Belief in any extreme doctrine of evolution cannot co-exist in any logical and well-balanced mind with the belief in the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead. But the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the

dead is entirely beyond any honest question. Therefore, every extreme, or all comprehending, doctrine of Evolution must go. It certainly will go. It is doomed beyond hope.

2. In the second place, *The Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead proves that Jesus, the Christ of God, was a Teacher sent from God, Divinely inspired and absolutely inerrant, who spoke the very words of God.* How does the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead prove that Jesus of Nazareth was a Teacher sent from God, Divinely inspired and absolutely inerrant, Who spoke the very Words of God? In this way: Jesus Christ while here on earth declared that He was a Teacher sent from God, that He was Divinely taught and absolutely inerrant, and that THE WORDS HE SPOKE WERE THE VERY WORDS OF GOD. He declared this time and time again in one form or another. Let me read you some of His utterances regarding this matter.

First of all listen to Jno. 7:16:

> "Jesus therefore answered them, and said, *My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me.*"

Again He said in Jno. 12:49, 50:

> "For *I spake not from Myself;* but the Father that sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment, *what I should say, and what I should speak.* And I know that His commandment is life eternal: *the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak.*"

In Jno. 14:24, he says:

> "He that loveth Me not keepeth not My Words:

and *the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's Who sent me.*"

Now here is the plainest possible declaration that the words which the apostles heard from Him were not His own words, but God the Father's own words.

In Jno. 3:34, we read:

"He Whom God hath sent (that is, of course, Jesus Christ) *speaketh the words of God:* for He giveth not the Spirit by measure."

In John 17:8 on the night immediately preceding His crucifixion, the Lord Jesus declares in one of the most solemn moments of His earthly life, when He was speaking not to men but to God Himself:

"The words which *Thou gavest Me I have given unto them;* and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me."

Here again is the plainest possible declaration on our Lord's part that the very *"words"* that He spoke were God's Own "words." This was Jesus Christ's undoubted claim: His claim was that His "words" were the very "words" of God. This was a stupendous claim to make. But making this claim does not prove it to be true. Others have made similar claims; but the difference between their claims on this matter and the claim of Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ substantiated His claim and no one else has ever substantiated his. *God Himself unmistakably set His stamp of endorsement upon this astounding claim of Jesus Christ by raising Him from the dead.* In the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead, those who question the infallible authority

and absolute inerrancy of Jesus Christ, including those who teach that during His earthly life *"He emptied Himself" of His Divine wisdom* and was subject to the same errors as other men of His day—I say in the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead, those teachers who thus question the infallible authority and absolute inerrancy of Jesus Christ, have absolutely no logical standing ground. Furthermore in the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead, those supposedly "scholarly" Biblical critics who demand that we give up the authority and inerrancy of Jesus Christ and of the Bible and accept their authority and inerrancy in their place, make themselves a laughing-stock to all intelligent, thoughtful and fair-minded men.

3. In the third place, *By the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead a solid foundation of indisputable, unassailable, impregnable and scientifically demonstrated fact is laid for our belief that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Son of God in a sense that no other person, either man or angel, is or ever was the Son of God; that He was God manifest in human form; a Being to be trusted and obeyed and honored and worshiped even as God the Father is trusted and obeyed and honored and worshiped.*

This was beyond a doubt the unhesitating claim of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of the Bible, when He was here on earth. He says in Mark 12:5, 6 (see R.V.), that while all the prophets of the old dispensation, even the greatest, were "servants," that He was the "Son," the "beloved Son" and the "One (and only) Son" of God.

He says in Jno. 10:30:

"I and the Father are One."

He even went so far as to say in Jno. 14:9:

"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

He demanded of His disciples that they put the same absolute faith and trust in Him that they put in God the Father.

We see this in Jno. 14:1 where He says to His disciples when they were dismayed at the thought of the separation from Him:

"Let not your heart be troubled: *believe in God, believe also in Me.*" (A.R.V.)

Here is a clear demand that the disciples put the same absolute confidence in Him that they put in God. These words of His are found in what is to the majority of Christian people, the most precious chapter in the Bible; and, if you give up these words of Jesus you must give up the most precious chapter in the whole Bible.

Jesus of Nazareth even went so far as to say in Jno. 5:23:

"All men should honor the Son (that is, of course, Himself), *even as they honor the Father.*"

This was indeed a stupendous claim to make. *If not true,* it was a blasphemous claim; and He Who made it, Jesus Christ our Lord, was in that case either the most daring and outrageous blasphemer in human history or else one of the most hopeless lunatics. But the claim was substantiated. God endorsed the claim by raising from the dead the one Who made it.

Jesus Christ declared to the ecclesiastical rulers of the day that they would put Him to death for making

this claim, but that God would set His seal of endorsement upon the claim by raising Him from the dead. They did put Him to death for making the claim, but when the appointed and plainly and precisely predicted hour was come the breath of God swept through that sleeping clay and God raised the One Who made the claim from the dead, and thus proclaimed to all mankind for all coming ages that this stupendous claim of Jesus Christ to being a Divine Person, equal to the Father, was true. By raising the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead God announced to all ages in a way more convincing and more satisfying than if He should speak with an audible voice from Heaven today, "Jesus Christ is My Only Son. He is so fully and completely Divine that to see Him is to see Me and all men should honor Him with exactly the same honor with which they honor Me."

As we have clearly seen, if we candidly face the facts in the case, we are compelled to admit the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead; and this admission of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead leads logically and inevitably and inescapably to an unquestioning faith in His Deity.

In the light of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, Unitarianism in any of its forms, or any other system of thought that denies the real Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ has absolutely no logical standing ground, Unitarian conceptions of Jesus Christ fall to the ground in hopeless and irreparable ruin.

4. In the fourth place, *By the Resurrection of the*

Body of Jesus Christ from the dead, God gives us His Own indubitable assurance that there is to be a Judgment Day and that the risen Jesus, the Christ of God, Christ Jesus, is to sit as the Judge in that Day. Paul, when he was speaking to that notable gathering of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers at the Areopagus, the most celebrated seat of Greek philosophy in his day, put it in this way, Acts 17:30, 31:

> "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man Whom He hath ordained; *whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.*"

Here Paul declares that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead was a God-given assurance that there was to be a judgment day and that Jesus Christ was to be the Judge in that day.

How does God by raising the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead, as it lay there in Joseph's tomb outside of Jerusalem, give assurance to all men that God is to judge the world by this Man, Christ Jesus, Whom He raised from the Dead? In this way: When here on earth Jesus Christ declared that there was to be a Judgment Day and that He Himself was to be the Judge in that Day. He says in Jno. 5:22, 27-29:

> "For neither doth the Father judge any man, but *He hath given all judgment unto the Son.* . . . (27-29) And He gave Him authority to execute judgment because He is Son of man. Marvel

not at this: for the hour cometh, *in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth;* they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."

Here is the clear and definite claim on the part of our Lord Jesus that there was to be a Judgment Day and that He Himself was to be the Judge. The ecclesiastical authorities of that day hated Jesus Christ for making this claim and put Him to death for making this claim (and the other claim involved in it, that of His Deity and of His equality with the Father); but before He was put to death Jesus Christ asserted that God would set the stamp of His endorsement upon this claim by raising Him from the dead. Men did put Him to death in the exact way that He predicted that they would, but God raised Him from the dead and in this way set the stamp of His endorsement upon the claim which men rejected.

Now this Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead is an historic certainty and by raising Him from the dead God set His own seal to Jesus Christ's claim that there was to be a Judgment Day and that Jesus Christ Himself was to be the Judge. The absolutely certain Resurrection of Jesus Christ in the past points forward with unerring finger to an absolutely certain Judgment Day in the future in which Jesus Christ is to sit as Judge.

If men ask me how I know there is to be a Judgment Day in which Jesus Christ will judge the world in righteousness, I reply, "I know it because I know that Jesus Christ arose from the Dead." Belief in

the Judgment Day is no mere conjecture of theological speculation, it is a positive and proven faith founded upon a scientifically proven fact. It is a scientifically proven *theorem,* not a merely speculative *theory.* In the light of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, those who flatter themselves that they can go on in sin and not be called to strictest account for it, above all those who try to comfort themselves with the hope that they can continue in that most damning of all sins, the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ, God's Son, and not be called to the sternest account in the future Day of Judgment, are flattering themselves with an absolutely baseless hope and are blindly dooming themselves to an eternity of darkness and despair.

5. In the fifth place, *By the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead, God declares to every believer in Jesus Christ that he is justified, that His Own absolutely perfect righteousness in Jesus Christ is put to the believer's account.*

Paul says this in Rom. 4:24, 25. These are his words:

> "Jesus our Lord . . . was delivered up for our trespasses, and *was raised for our justification.*"

The Greek preposition twice translated "for" in verse twenty-five should be translated in each case "because of" or "on account of," and the verse would then properly read, "Who was delivered up because of our trespasses, and was raised *because of our justification.*" THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD POSITIVELY DEMONSTRATES THAT EVERY BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST IS JUSTIFIED. How does

the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead demonstrate that every believer in Jesus Christ is justified? In this way: when Jesus was here on earth He said that He would offer up His life a ransom for many. These are His words as found in Matt. 20:28:

> "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give His life a ransom for many.*"

The hour came to offer up His life, and He offered it up on the Cross of Calvary "as a ransom" for us. Now He has offered to God an atonement for sins; but there still remains a question, Will God accept the atonement which has been thus offered? For three nights and three days that question remains unanswered, Jesus' body lies there in the grave cold and dead, but at last the long predicted hour arrives and the breath of God sweeps through that sleeping clay and Jesus, the Christ of God, arises triumphant from the dead and is exalted to the right hand of God the Father, and God thereby proclaims to the whole universe, "I have accepted the atonement which Jesus, My Christ, has made." By raising Jesus Christ from the dead God declared that He had accepted the propitiation that Jesus Christ offered and thereby declared us righteous in His Own sight.

When another agrees to settle for my responsibilities I always want to know whether the settlement has been accepted. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's declaration that He has accepted and is satisfied with the settlement that Jesus Christ has made in my behalf. Therefore by that Resurrection I am declared

righteous in God's sight. I look at Jesus Christ upon the cross and I know that a propitiation has been offered to God, but I look at the empty tomb and the risen Christ and know that God has accepted the propitiation that Jesus offered. In the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead we see clearly that there is pardon and justification for the vilest sinner that walks the earth, on the sole and single condition of faith in Him Who died on the cross in our behalf.

Furthermore, when Jesus Christ died, He died as our Representative; when He arose, He arose as our Representative; when He ascended into Heaven, he ascended into Heaven as our Representative; when He took His seat at the right hand of the Father up yonder in the glory, He took His seat as my Representative and yours, and to-day that is our real position, seated together with Him "in the heavenlies." (Eph. 2:6, 7).

As One risen, ascended, seated, Jesus Christ is declared to be God's chosen, accepted and righteous One and all who are in Him are declared to be chosen, accepted and righteous in Him. There no longer remains one single sin on me, if I am a real believer in Jesus Christ, no matter how many or how great my sins may have been. My sins may have been as high as the mountains, but in the light of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead the atonement that covers them is as high as Heaven: My sins may have been as deep as the ocean, but in the light of the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead the atonement that swallows them up is as deep as eternity.

To put it in the wonderful words of the Apostle Paul found in Acts 13:38, 39:

> "Be it known unto you *therefore* (that is, because of His Resurrection), brethren, that through this Man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and *by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things.*"

6. In the sixth place, *The Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead provides a foundation of solid and unassailable and impregnable fact for our belief that all who are united to Christ by a living faith shall live again; and that not only our spirits shall live again but that our bodies shall be raised from the grave and glorified.* Paul puts it this way in 1 Thess. 4:14-16:

> "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so *them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.* For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the *dead in Christ shall rise* first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Paul puts precisely the same thought in different words in 2 Cor. 4:14:

> "Knowing that *He that raised up the Lord*

Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you."

The believer is so united to Jesus, the Christ of God, by a living faith that if He arose from the dead we also must arise from the dead some day. If the grave could not hold Him it cannot hold me. Praise God!

For centuries men have been seeking proofs of immortality, of life after death. We have had the dreams of poets and speculations of theologians and philosophers to cheer us with the *hope* that we should live again; but the best of philosophical arguments only points to the probability of life after death, but in a matter like this the human heart craves and demands something more than probability—it demands certainty. In the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we get something more than probability, we get absolute certainty, we get scientific demonstration of life beyond the grave, and of the Resurrection of the body. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ removes the hope of immortality from the domain of speculation and probability into the domain of scientific and absolute certainty. We *know* that there is life beyond the grave.

While I was in England the most prominent of the "New Theology" men in that country declared, "Not a few are not at all sure that there is any life beyond the grave. They wish it could be proven. So do I. But we can do no more than infer it from the moral constitution of the universe." I thank God, that this "Modernist" preacher was utterly wrong in his statement. Before the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus

Christ from the dead, perhaps the best that we could do was to "infer it from the moral constitution of the universe," but since the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead that is no longer true. In the light of His Resurrection it is no longer left to uncertain inference "from the moral constitution of the universe," it is a scientifically proven fact. No further proof is needed.

We know that God will raise us up because as a matter of historic certainty He raised Him up.

As Paul puts it in Rom. 8:11:

> "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you."

The Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead has robbed death of all its terrors for the believer. Instead of cringing in terror in the presence of death we triumphantly shout, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55).

By the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, life after death and the resurrection of the body is scientifically demonstrated; and to any one who will calmly ponder the facts in regard to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ all unbelief or agnosticism in regard to the future life becomes an impossibility.

In the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead we have immeasurably better proof of life after death than in the supposed and shadowy materializations of the spirits of the dead in darkened and

skillfully prepared rooms, exploited by Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and an endless list of mediumistic fakers, all of whom are sooner or later proven to be shameless tricksters and frauds. By the scientifically demonstrated Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the Dead, Life after Death and the Resurrection of the Body are scientifically demonstrated.

If any one will ponder the facts in regard to the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus of Nazareth, unbelief or agnosticism in regard to the future life, or the resurrection of the body, becomes an intellectual impossibility. In the light of the first Easter morning I go out into the cities of the dead where now lie asleep in Jesus the bodies of my father, my mother, my two brothers and two of my daughters and all my tears are wiped away, for I hear the Father saying, "Thy father shall live again, thy mother shall live again, thy brother shall live again, thy two children shall live again, clad with far greater beauty than was seen in their faces when they were here upon earth."

7. In the seventh place, *The Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead proves that we have an ever-living High Priest at the right hand of God in the glory to continually make intercession for us and Who is therefore able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God through Him.* This Paul tells us in Rom. 8:34:

> "Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that *was raised from*

the dead, Who is at the right hand of God, *Who also maketh intercession for us.*"

And God tells us again in Heb. 7:25:

"Wherefore also *He is able to save to the uttermost* them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing *He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*"

The words, "to the *uttermost*" are very expressive. Their literal force is "unto all completeness." Salvation is begun by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ; it is continued by the Resurrection and consequent intercession of Christ. We have not only a Saviour Who died and so made a perfect atonement for sin, but we have also a Saviour Who arose and carried the blood He had shed on the cross into the Holy of Holies, into God's own very presence, and He presents it there, and He ever lives to plead our cause in every new case of failure.

As John puts it in 1 Jno. 2:1:

"My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*"

He always lives to plead our cause, if we are believers in Him; and so we are forever safe, for the Father heareth Him always (Jno. 11:42). In this unceasing intercession of the Risen Christ in our behalf lies our abiding security and our assurance of the ultimate perfect completeness of Christ's work in us.

8. In the eighth place, *Because of the Resurrection*

of Jesus Christ every believer in Christ is joined to a risen Christ and therefore brings forth fruit to God in His daily life. Listen to the way Paul puts it in Rom. 7:4:

> "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ (that is through the death of His body on the cross); that *ye should be joined to another, even to Him Who was raised from the dead, that* we *might bring forth fruit unto God.*"

The only living or doing or accomplishment in the Christian life that is effective or acceptable to God is through union with the Risen Christ. Through our union with the crucified Christ we get our pardon, our cleansing from guilt, our justification, our perfect standing before God: *through union with the Risen Christ we get power for life and to bring forth fruit.*

One chief reason why there is so little of life and fruit bearing in many professedly Christian lives today is because there is so little knowledge of and so little meditation upon the Risen Christ. Paul tells us that we were raised together with Christ *"through faith in the working of God Who raised Him from the dead"* (Col. 2:12), and he tells us in another place that we were raised with Him "So we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

The *full* power of Christ's Resurrection we shall not know until we attain unto the Resurrection of the dead ourselves (Phil. 3:10, 11), but "the power of His Resurrection" in our moral and spiritual lives, begetting us unto "newness of life" and "fruit unto God" we may know even now by being "joined to Him

Who was raised from the dead." May I put to each one of you the question, Are you "joined to Another *even to Him Who was raised from the dead"?* Herein lies the whole secret of holy living, newness of life, victory over sin, fruit unto God.

9. In the ninth place, *The Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ from the dead proves that it is every believer's privilege to have daily, hourly and constant victory over sin.* We are united, as we have just seen, not only to the Lord Jesus Who died and Who thus made perfect atonement for our sins and Who thus delivered us from the guilt of sin, but we are united to the Lord Jesus Who arose again and Who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," and Who *therefore* "is able to save to the uttermost." We are united to the One Who has power to keep us from falling day by day, the One Who "is able to guard us from stumbling and to present us before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy." (Jude 24). In myself I am weak, utterly weak, unable to resist temptation for a single hour; but He is strong, infinitely strong, and He ever lives to give me help and deliverance every day and every hour. The question of victory over sin is not at all a question of my weakness, it is entirely a question of His strength, His Resurrection power which is always at my disposal. He has "all power in Heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28: 18), and what my risen Lord has belongs to me also. In the light of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, failure in daily living is unnecessary and inexcusable. In His Resurrection, life and power it is our privilege and our duty to lead victorious lives.

To use an illustration that I used some years ago on this platform and that is found in one of my books: Four men were once climbing the slippery and perilous side of the Matterhorn. First came a guide and then a tourist and then a second guide and then a second tourist, all roped together. The tourist in the rear lost his footing and slipped over the side of the mountain. The sudden pull on the rope carried the lower guide with him and he in turn carried the other tourist with him. Three men are now dangling over that dizzy cliff. But the guide who was in the lead, when he felt the first pull upon the rope, drove his pike into the ice, braced his feet and held fast. There they hang, three men dangling over that awful abyss and yet three men perfectly safe because tied to the man that stood fast. The first tourist regained his place upon the path, the guide regained his place and then the tourist in the rear regained his, and on and on, and up and up, they went in safety to the summit of the mountain. Just so the human race was ascending the icy cliffs of life. The first Adam lost his footing and was swept out over the abyss, he pulled the next after him and he the next and the next and so on until the whole human race hangs over the frightful abyss. But the second Adam, the Man in the glory, stands fast, and all who are united to Him by a living faith, even though dangling over the awful precipice, are safe, because tied to the Man in the glory.

CHAPTER VI

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE, AND HIS EXALTATION TO THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER

The subject of this chapter is, The Ascension of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, and His Exaltation to the Right Hand of God the Father. This is a subject regarding which very little is said in most of our present day preaching. We do not in these days hear as much as we ought about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, nothing like as much as was heard in the days of the apostles, and we hear practically nothing at all about His Ascension into Heaven. The Bible, however, has much to say about it, and what it has to say is not only very instructive but also very cheering, encouraging, gladdening and thrilling. If one wishes to "play the Glad Game" with thorough and continuous success, he needs to reflect much and often on our ascended Lord seated at the right hand of God the Father in the eternal glory.

At the very outset let us look at ten passages of Scripture. First, Luke 24: 50-53:

> "And He led them out until they were over against Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, *while He blessed them,* He parted from them, and was *carried up into heaven.* And they worshipped

Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, blessing God."

In our second passage we are told of this same incident by this same person, Luke, with other suggestive and instructive details added. You will find the account in Acts 1:7-11:

"And He said unto them, It is not for you to know times and seasons, which the Father hath set within His Own authority. But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when He had said these things, *as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.* And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, *who was received up* from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye *beheld Him going into heaven.*"

We turn now to Heb. 1:1-4:

"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power,

when He had made purification of sins, *sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;* having become by so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they."

Our fourth text is also from the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb. 10: 10-13:

"By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest indeed standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, the which can never take away sins: but He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat down on the right hand of God;* henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet."

You will find our fifth text in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, Eph. 1: 15-23:

"For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which ye show toward all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the *exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe,* according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when

He raised Him from the dead, and *made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places,* far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

Now let us look at three passages all from the same book, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the book that has perhaps more to say about the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of God, than any other book in the Bible.

Heb. 6: 18-20:

"That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stedfast and entering into that which is within the veil; *whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us,* having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Heb. 7: 22-28:

"By so much also hath Jesus become the surety of a better covenant. And they indeed have been made priests many in number, because that by death they are hindered from continuing: but He, because He abideth for ever, hath His priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also He is able to *save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God*

through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this He did once for all, when He offered up Himself. For the law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was after the law, appointeth a Son, perfected for evermore."

Heb. 9:21-24:

"Moreover the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry he sprinkled in like manner with the blood. And according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission. It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For *Christ entered* not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but *into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us.*"

For our ninth passage we turn to the Gospel of John, Jno. 14:12:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; *because I go unto the Father.*"

The last passage is the one that sets forth most vividly and luminously the heights from which Jesus,

the Christ of God, descended when He came into this world, the depths to which He descended in order to save you and me, and the heights to which He is now exalted, Phil. 2:6-11:

> "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly *exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*"

That we have so many passages, and in some cases such long passages, may indicate to you how full the Bible is of this interesting and important subject; but even so I shall have to refer to still other passages before we get through. What we shall have to say on this vitally important subject we will group under four heads:

I. The Fact of the Ascension and Present Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible.

II. The Manner of the Ascension and Present Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible.

III. The Purpose of the Ascension and Present Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible.

IV. The Results of the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, or What the Ascen-

sion and Present Exaltation and Glory of Jesus Christ Means to You and Me.

I cannot hope to tell you all that the Bible has to say on this great and glorious subject, but I do expect to tell you enough to cause you to arise from reading this chapter with a very glad and jubilant heart, and with an increased sense of what a wonderful Saviour we have, and with an increased desire to serve Him, and with a very vivid realization of the great power for service that is at the disposal of the weakest believer in Jesus Christ, our risen, ascended and exalted Lord and Saviour.

I. THE FACT OF THE ASCENSION AND PRESENT EXALTATION OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD.

First of all then, let us look at the Fact of the Ascension of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, and of His Present Exaltation and Glory. Let us read again the first four of the passages cited. Luke 24:50-53:

> "And He led them out until they were over against Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, *while He blessed them,* He parted from them, and was *carried up into heaven.* And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, blessing God."

Acts 1:7-11:

> "And He said unto them, It is not for you to know times and seasons, which the Father hath set within His Own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon

you: and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when He had said these things, *as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.* And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, *who was received up from you into heaven,* shall so come in like manner as ye *beheld Him going into heaven.*"

Heb. 1:3, 4:

"Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, *sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;* having become by so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they."

Heb. 10:10-13:

"By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest indeed standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, the which can never take away sins: but He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat down on the right hand of God;* henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet."

Let me add to these a passage which I did not cite before, Eph. 4:8-10:

"Wherefore He saith, *When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive,* and *gave gifts unto men.* (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that *ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.*)"

The first of these verses is a quotation from the Sixty-eighth Psalm, the eighteenth verse, where we have an Old Testament prediction of the future Ascension of the Christ of God. *In all of these passages taken together we have a plain declaration from God Himself, that His Christ, the only true Christ, Christ Jesus, after having descended into the earth in order to make atonement for our sins, having fully accomplished that atoning work, has ascended and been received into Heaven again and is now seated in the place of authority and power, "on the right hand of the Majesty on high."* Some of the professedly and supposedly *"scholarly"* modernists tell us that the Ascension of the Lord Jesus is mentioned only in two obscure passages, which they try to discredit and explain away. By saying this they simply illustrate anew their dense ignorance of the Book upon which they seek to discourse in such a learned way. Even though it were mentioned only once, if that passage were to any candid mind perfectly clear in its meaning, that would be enough to establish the fact. But in point of actual fact the Ascension or Exaltation of Jesus Christ is spoken of thirty-three or more times in the New Testament. Yes, BEYOND ANY INTELLIGENT DOUBT THERE IS A MAN TO-DAY UP

YONDER IN THE GLORY seated "on the right hand of the Majesty on high." And that Man is the One Who became Man in order that He might bear our sins in His Own Body on the cross and thus put them away forever. And He is the One Who was our Representative when He died on the cross, and so we died in Him; and just so now He is our Representative and we, every one of us who is united to Him by a living faith, are seated up there in Him. That is our real position even while we tarry here a while. Are you not glad that you believe in Him? And you who are not united to Him by a living faith, will you not put your faith in Him right now?

II. THE MANNER OF THE ASCENSION AND EXALTATION OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD.

Now let us consider the Manner of the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible.

1. In the first place, *Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven while the disciples were looking and received out of their sight:* that is to say that, *The taking up of Jesus into heaven was a literal, visible taking up of His Resurrection Body into Heaven.* This we are told in Luke 24:51 and in Acts 1:9.

These are Luke's words:

> "And it came to pass, *while He blessed them,* He parted from them, and *was carried up into heaven.*"
>
> "And when He had said these things, *as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.*"

He was carried up by a power from without, the power of God; the same hand and the same power that raised His body from the grave, exalted Him and *carried that body up to His Own right hand in the glory.*

2. In the second place, *The glory to which Jesus, the Christ of God, has been exalted is the same glory that He had with the Father from all eternity until He voluntarily chose to give up that glory and to empty Himself and come down to this world to die a felon's death on the cross as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.* This we see from the prayer He Himself offered on the night before His crucifixion, Jno. 17:5:

> "And now, Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

Thank God, my Saviour now has back again the Divine glory that He gave up to redeem and save me. Oh, sometimes when I think of what Jesus sacrificed and suffered for me, when I see Him on the cross, suffering, tortured, deserted of all friends, and mocked at by that heartless, cruel mob, deserted even of the Father because He took my place, heart breaking under the strain, my heart is filled with agony; and then I hear that triumphant cry from the cross, "It is finished," and then I see Him risen from the dead, ascending into Heaven and then seated in the glory, on "the right hand of the Majesty on high," again on the right hand of the Father, and then relief and joy and jubilant exultation at His Exaltation fills my heart. How much we miss by not thinking more about it.

He is no longer on the cross, no longer even walking this earth as the risen One: No, He is seated up yonder at the Father's own right hand, far above all heavens (Eph. 1:20; Heb. 7:26; 4:14; Eph. 4:10, R.V.), He is now exalted "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (all the heavenly hierarchies of angelic hosts), and all things have been put "in subjection under His feet." (Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11). Praise God!

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE ASCENSION AND EXALTATION OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD.

Now let us consider the Purpose of the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible. Here we shall not be able to say all that might well be said,[1] but some things we must mention.

1. In the first place, *Jesus Christ was exalted to enter heaven as a Forerunner for us and to open to us the gates of heaven by presenting His atoning blood in Heaven, and by His high-priestly intercession.* This we are told in Heb. 6:19, 20:

> "Which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and stedfast and entering into that which is within the veil; *whither as a Forerunner Jesus entered for us,* having become a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Jesus entered Heaven nearly nineteen centuries ago

[1] I have gone into it fully and in detail in "What the Bible Teaches."

that I too might enter Heaven some day. He went there as my *"Forerunner,"* and some day I am to sit down with Him upon His throne even as He now has sat down with the Father on His throne. Listen to what He Himself says in Rev. 3:20-22:

> "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with Him, and He with Me. He that overcometh I will give to him *to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne.* He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

I would like to linger here, but we must pass on.

2. In the second place, *Jesus Christ is ascended into heaven to prepare heaven itself as an abode for His Own.* This our Lord Jesus Himself declared to His disciples for their comfort the night before He left them. You will find His words in Jno. 14:1, 2:

> "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for *I go to prepare a place for you."*

The question at once arises in our minds, How does the ascended Christ prepare heaven for His blood-bought people? God's Own answer to this question is found in Heb. 9:21-24:

> "Moreover *the tabernacle* and all the vessels of the ministry *he sprinkled* in like manner *with the blood.* And according to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart

> from shedding of blood there is no remission. It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens *should be cleansed* with these; but *the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.* For *Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us.*"

It is evident from these words, to say nothing of other passages where it is plainly taught, that heaven itself has been defiled by sin and must be sprinkled with blood to be fitted to be the abode of blood-sprinkled sinners, and that Jesus entered into heaven to present His cleansing blood there, just as the high priest, once a year, entered into the Holy of Holies, the type of heaven. There may be, for all I know, other ways also in which Jesus, our Forerunner and High Priest, is getting heaven ready for you and me.

3. In the third place, *Jesus Christ ascended and entered into heaven to now appear before the face of God in our behalf, i.e., to act as High Priest on our behalf, to present His blood, the blood of atonement, and make intercession for us.* This, we are told in Heb. 9:24:

> "For *Christ entered* not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but *into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us.*"

4. In the fourth place, *Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and sat down on the right hand of God to expectantly await the complete subjection of His*

enemies and the restoration of all things. This, we are told in a number of passages, for example, Heb. 10: 12, 13:

> "But He, when He had *offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet.*"

We learn the same great truth from Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2: 34, 35:

> "For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,
>
> The Lord said unto my Lord,
> *Sit Thou on My right hand,*
> *Till I make Thine enemies the footstool*
> *of Thy feet.*"

Peter declared the same truth again in the next chapter, Acts 3: 19-21:

> "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send the Christ Who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: *Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things,* whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets that have been from of old."

When the time of the complete subjection of the enemies of Jesus Christ and of the restoration of all things arrives, Jesus, the Christ of God, will come forth and His enemies shall be quickly subdued unto Him.

5. In the fifth place, *Jesus Christ ascended far*

above the heavens that He might fill all things. This we see in Eph. 4:10:

> *"He* that descended is the same also that *ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things."*

By His descending into the earth, and then after His death into Hades, and then by His Return from Hades and the Resurrection of His Body, and by His Ascension in His resurrection body into Heaven, He became Lord of heaven and earth and hell.

6. In the sixth place, *God highly exalted our Lord Jesus and gave unto Him a name which is above every name in order that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* This we are told in Phil. 2:9-11:

> "Wherefore also *God highly exalted Him,* and gave unto Him the *name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

IV. THE RESULTS OF THE ASCENSION AND EXALTATION OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD; OR, WHAT THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST MEANS TO US TO-DAY.

We come now to the last division of our subject, and the one that is of the greatest practical importance to us, and the one that must thrill our hearts with joy

unspeakable and full of glory, and fill them with boundless hope, and stir them with enthusiastic determination to go forth and work as never before for our Crucified, Risen and Ascended Lord, now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high: the Results of the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus, the Christ of God, or What the Ascension of Jesus Christ Means to Us To-day.

1. In the first place, *In the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus Christ we see the exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward.* This Paul tells us in Eph. 1:18-20:

> "Having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and *what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ,* when He raised Him *from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places.*"

Do you want to know what God can do for every one who is in Christ, what He can do for you, if you are a true believer in Jesus Christ? If you do, just look at what He has already done in Jesus Himself when He raised Him from the dead, carried Him up bodily into Heaven, and made Him to sit at His own right hand in the heavenly places. That shows "the exceeding greatness of His power *to us-ward who believe,*" the exceeding greatness of His power toward you and me, what He can do for you and me, and what He will do for you and me. Does it not take

your breath away? But however overwhelming and incredible it may appear, that is what the Book says. Compare that with the vague and vapory future in store for you of which Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle try to descant in such eloquent language. And yet Sir Arthur Conan Doyle says that his man-made religion, or demon-made religion, is better and loftier than Christianity. He says that "Christianity is dead," poor, deluded, spiritualistic dupe.

2. In the second place, *Because of the Ascension and Exaltation of Jesus Christ, we have a High Priest Who "ever liveth to make intercession for us" and Who can "save to the uttermost all those that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us."* This precious truth is set forth and emphasized in Heb. 7:25:

> "Wherefore also *He is able to save to the uttermost* them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He *ever liveth to make intercession for them.*"

The words, "to the *uttermost,*" are very expressive. Their literal force is *"unto all completeness."* Salvation is begun by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, it is continued and completed by the Resurrection and Ascension and consequent Intercession of Christ. We have not only a Saviour Who died and in that way made a perfect atonement for our sins, but we have also a Saviour Who arose and ascended into heaven, and carried the blood He had shed on the cross into the Holy of Holies, into God's Own very Presence, and He presents it there and He ever lives to plead

our cause in every new case of failure. As John puts it in 1 Jno. 2:1:

> "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*"

He always lives to plead our cause (if we are believers in Him) and so we are forever safe, for the Father heareth Him always (Jno. 11:42). In this unceasing intercession on our behalf of the risen and ascended Christ lies our abiding security and our assurance of the ultimate perfect completeness of Christ's work in us.

3. In the third place, *Through the Exaltation of Jesus Christ we have an High Priest Who has passed through the heavens and is now in the very Presence of God, and therefore we can hold fast our confession and draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace.* Let me read it to you from God's Own Word. Heb. 4:14-16:

> "Having then a great High Priest, Who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For *we have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;* but One that hath *been in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace,* that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need."

Have you any temptation in these times of apostasy when so many (even many church members and church

officers and even preachers and theological professors) are becoming traitors to our Divine Lord, to join the boastful and boisterous gang and forsake your Lord with this pretentious pirate crew? Remember your Lord Jesus, not only risen, but ascended into the glory, seated "at the right hand of the Majesty on high," and "hold fast (your) confession."

Are there times when you try to draw nigh to God in prayer and when Satan whispers (or hisses) into your ear, "You are not fit to draw near to God, He won't hear your prayers"? Remember your High Priest, Jesus in the glory, *in the very Presence of God,* pleading for you, and tell Satan to his face, "No, I am not worthy; but He is worthy and He can be and is 'touched with the feeling of my infirmities,' and HE *is in the very Presence of God pleading for me,"* and then, turning your back upon Satan, "draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that (you) may receive mercy and may find grace to help (you) in time of need."

If ever we have any hesitation or fear in our approach to God, all we have to do is to remember our risen and glorified Saviour, bearing in mind He is our great High Priest in the very Presence of God, at the very "right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. 8: 1).

4. In the fourth place, *Because of His Exaltation, Jesus Christ has received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and has poured Him forth upon His believing and obedient children, thus giving gifts for service unto men.* Read Jesus' Own Words and John's comment on them in John 7: 37-39:

"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, from within shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for *the Spirit was not yet given;* because Jesus was not yet glorified." But He is glorified now.

And read also our Lord Jesus' Words in John 16:7:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; *but if I go, I will send Him unto you.*"

Now listen to Peter as he spoke on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:33:

"Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, *He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.*"

Put alongside of these words of Peter, Paul's words also, in Eph. 4:8:

"Wherefore He saith,
When He ascended on high, he led captivity captive,
And *gave gifts unto men.*"

IT IS THE ASCENDED CHRIST WHO BAPTIZES WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND IT IS NOW POSSIBLE FOR EVERY ONE, EVEN THE HUMBLEST BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST, TO BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST BECAUSE HE IS ASCENDED, AND

WE DO NOT HAVE TO WAIT AS DID THE APOSTLES AND THEIR ASSOCIATES TEN DAYS TILL "PENTECOST" HAD "FULLY COME." PENTECOST NOW HAS ALREADY COME. Jesus Christ is now in the glory, He has already received the Holy Spirit for us and can shed Him forth upon us the moment we fulfill the conditions, without any hypnotic "tarrying meetings," or tarryings of any kind whatever. I have seen multitudes in America and in Japan and in Germany (in one of the Royal chapels in Berlin) filled with the Holy Ghost *the moment they believed.*

5. In the fifth place, *Because of the Exaltation of Jesus Christ, those who believe in Him receive power to do greater works than He Himself wrought during the days of His humiliation.* Our Lord Himself told this to His disciples in one of the most remarkable utterances that ever fell from His lips. You will find it in John 14: 12:

> "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; *because I go unto the Father.*"

During His life here on earth Jesus, the Christ of God, lived in His humiliation. He is now ascended and in full possession of His Divine glory and "all authority hath been given unto" him in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28: 18, R.V.), and we are now united to an ascended and glorified Christ, Who possesses all power in heaven and on earth, and, therefore, we can do greater things than He Himself wrought during the days of His humiliation, while living here upon

earth. We may now know Christ, not as He was after the flesh, i.e., as He was in His humiliation, but as He is now, in His glory (2 Cor. 5: 16).

As interpreted by the experience of the apostles, these "greater works" that the Lord Jesus promised that they would accomplish because of His Ascension to the Father, were not in the line of physical miracles, such as the healing of the sick. In point of fact along that line their works were not comparable to the works of the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry. The "greater works" were along a far higher and far more important line, the line of spiritual healing and spiritual resurrection, the resurrection of the multitude of souls once dead because of their trespasses and sins (Eph. 2: 1-8). Because He had ascended and consequently received the Holy Spirit from the Father and shed Him forth on them at Pentecost, the Apostles won more souls in one day than He won in all the years of His ministry.

Some to-day try to excuse the fruitlessness of their ministry in soul-winning by saying that Jesus Himself had only a hundred and twenty converts, or, at the most, five hundred converts, as a result of His entire ministry; but they forget that at that time He was in His humiliation and that the Holy Spirit was not yet come, because He was not yet glorified, but that He now is in the glory and we are united to an ascended Christ in the glory, Who has received from the Father the Holy Spirit for His people and baptizes His people with the Holy Spirit.

6. In the sixth place, *By the Exaltation of Jesus Christ, all things have been put into subjection under*

His feet and He has been made head over all things to the church. Here is the way the Holy Spirit speaking through the Apostle Paul, puts it in Eph. 1 : 20-22 :

> "Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : and *He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church.*"

We each one of us have as our Saviour, and High Priest, and the Church as a body has as its head, One to Whom all things in heaven and on earth and under the earth are in subjection. Even all the heavenly hosts and the hierarchies of "angels and authorities and powers" have been "made subject unto Him," as we read in 1 Pet. 3 : 21, 22 :

> "Jesus Christ, *Who is on the right hand of God,* having gone into heaven; *angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.*"

By His Incarnation Jesus was made lower than the angels : by His Ascension He was made higher than all the angels, and not only so, but higher than the highest ranks of angelic hosts, "authorities," and "powers" (all "angels," all "authorities" and all "powers" have been "made subject unto Him"). Hallelujah! what a Saviour! What a contrast between this Saviour, the Christ of the Bible, and the petty "Man of Galilee" of Unitarianism and "The New Theology"; and yet these puerile dreamers of dreams (largely pipe dreams) call us who preach the fully

Divine and altogether glorious Saviour, the Christ of the Bible, "obscurantists." This name as applied to us is a glaring lie. We obscure nothing; no, rather we are trying to make clear the full glory of our Divine Lord. They, themselves, *obscure* the Divine glory of this One Who is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him; they seek to reduce Him to the level of their own paltry and pitiable pettiness.

7. In the seventh place, *Because of the Exaltation of Jesus Christ, "in the name of Jesus every knee shall (ultimately) bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue (shall) confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* This also Paul declares in Phil. 2:6-11:

> "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also *God highly exalted Him,* and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that *in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

Oh, the day of man's trifling treatment of Jesus,

the highly exalted Christ of God, will not be long. He is already exalted by God, God has already given "unto Him the name which is above every name"; and soon the whole universe will see it and acknowledge Him and every "knee (shall) bow of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth and . . . every tongue (shall) confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Even the Devil and all demons and all the lost in hell shall bow the knee to Jesus and with their tongues confess that He is Lord. Listen! You who have never yet bowed the knee to Jesus Christ as Lord, you will have to do it some day. You would better do it voluntarily right now while it will bring salvation. If you won't you will have to do it by compulsion in that Day when you are consigned to an everlasting hell.

CHAPTER VII

THE RETURN FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE: OR, THE SECOND COMING OF THE CHRIST

The subject of this chapter is, The Return of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, from heaven (where He now is) to this earth; or, as it is commonly spoken of, The Second Coming of The Christ. There is perhaps no other subject regarding Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, that has awakened so much interest in recent years, upon which there is so much difference of opinion, and which has provoked so much controversy even among good men who profess to believe in the whole Bible, and oftentimes such bitter controversy, as the Second Coming of Christ. But what the Bible has to say on this subject is clear as crystal and as definite and as positive as words can make it, both in the English versions and in the original Greek of the New Testament and the original Hebrew of the Old Testament. What we shall say is built entirely upon a long continued and careful and thorough and entirely unprejudiced study not merely of the Authorized Version and of the Revised Version but of the Greek New Testament and the Hebrew Old Testament. I have read many books on different sides and different phases of this question, books in English and books in German, but everything that I shall have to say will be built entirely upon one book, The Book, God's Own Book,

The Bible. We shall begin with seven passages of Scripture which are of fundamental importance. These seven passages do not contain all I have to say: they are simply the keynote of what I have to say, and many other passages of Scripture will be examined later; but we do not intend to express one single thought or to say one single word that is not built upon some specific portion of the Word of God which we shall cite in connection with the thought. I shall not waste your time with any speculations of my own on this tremendously important subject; I shall give you nothing but what God Himself has been pleased to say in a Book that He intended to be understood; and God knows enough to make Himself understood, if men really desire to understand what He has to say and not merely to find something in God's Word to bolster up their own preconceived and self-made opinions.

We shall indulge in no bitterness or ridicule or cheap attempts at sarcasm. They are entirely out of place in any honest search after the truth, but they are peculiarly out of place in discussions regarding this precious doctrine and blessed hope.

Our first passage is our Lord's own parting promise to His disciples, made the night before He left them, found in Jno. 14:1-3:

> "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I come again,* and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

The second passage is Heb. 9:28:

"So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, *shall appear a second time,* apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation."

The third passage is Phil. 3:20, 21:

"For our citizenship is in heaven; *whence also we wait for a Saviour,* the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

Our fourth passage is one that we had occasion to refer to several times in the Sixth Chapter, in studying the Ascension of Jesus, the Christ of God, and His Exaltation to the right hand of the Father in Heaven, Acts 1:9-11:

"And when He (Jesus) had said these things, as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were looking stedfastly *into heaven as He went,* behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking *into heaven?* this Jesus, Who *was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven."*

The fifth passage is 1 Thess. 4:16, 17:

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive,

that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The sixth passage is Acts 3: 19-21:

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and *that He may send the Christ Who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things,* whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets that have been from of old."

The seventh and last passage is the last prayer in the Bible, the prayer that sums up all the longings of the believing heart, a prayer inspired by the revelations and promises of this wonderful Book of God that so closes, Rev. 22: 20:

"He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus."

We shall consider:

First, the Importance of the Bible Doctrine of the Return of the Lord Jesus from Heaven, where He now is, to this earth where we now are and where He once was;

Second, the Fact of His Return to this Earth;

Third, the Manner of our Lord's Return from Heaven where He now is to this earth;

Fourth, the Results of the Return of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, the only true Christ, from Heaven where He now is to this earth;

Fifth, the Time when Jesus is Coming back again to this Earth.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF THE RETURN OF OUR LORD JESUS FROM HEAVEN WHERE HE NOW IS TO THIS EARTH, WHERE HE ONCE WAS.

We shall consider first the Importance of the Bible Doctrine of the Return of our Lord Jesus from Heaven, where He now is, to this earth, where He once was.

1. In the first place, *The importance of the doctrine of the Return of our Lord Jesus from Heaven where He now is to this earth is seen in the fact that it is mentioned at least three hundred and eighteen times in the two hundred and sixty chapters of the New Testament and that it occupies at least one in every twenty-five verses from Matthew to Revelation.* The doctrine of our Lord's future Return from Heaven to the earth certainly does not occupy so large a place in the preaching of the average minister of the Gospel to-day as it does in the New Testament.

I met one Monday morning in the Chicago Gallery of Fine Arts one of the Congregational ministers of that city. I said to him, "What did you preach about yesterday?" He replied, "I preached on the Second Coming of Christ. We were taught in the Theological Seminary that we were to give truth in scriptural proportions; and, as I am told that the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ is found once in every twenty-five verses of the New Testament, I preach one sermon in every twenty-five on the Second Coming of Christ." That probably was reducing it to too much of a mathematical nicety; nevertheless, certainly the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ should oc-

cupy a far larger place in our preaching than it does in the preaching of the average minister of to-day.

2. In the second place, *We see the Importance of the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ in the fact that by far the greater number of predictions in the Old Testament concerning the Christ Who was to come, do not refer to His Coming in the earthly life which He has already lived here upon earth, His coming to die as an atoning sacrifice for sin, but to His Return to this earth from Heaven as a conquering King after He had died and was raised and ascended to the right hand of the Father.*

3. In the third place, *The Importance of the truth of our Lord's Return from Heaven to earth is seen in the fact that this is the one truth with which God bids us to comfort those believers who are sorrowing over the death of their loved ones.* This we see in 1 Thess. 4: 13-18:

> "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that *ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope.* For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For *the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven,* with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught

up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore *comfort one another with these words.*"

My own experience in my forty-five years of ministry is that there is no other doctrine taught in the Word of God that brings such comfort and joy to the hearts of real Christians in the midst of their saddest bereavements as the doctrine of the Return of the Lord Jesus. I have found it so, not only in my own personal experience when loved ones have been taken from me, but also in the many letters of consolation that I have written to friends in different parts of the world whose loved ones have been taken from them. I never write a letter of comfort to any one who is sorrowing for the departure of those who have fallen asleep in Christ in which I do not refer to the Second Coming of our Lord, and I always quote the specific passage which I have just read; and times without number I have received letters back speaking of the abounding comfort that came to those to whom I have written through what I had said on this point.

In a similar way the Coming of the Lord Jehovah in the Person of our Lord Jesus in His Return to this earth to rule, is the one doctrine with which the Old Testament prophets were commanded to comfort God's people in their oppression and sorrow. This we see in Isa. 40: 1, 2, 9, 10, 11:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to (Hebrew—to the heart of) Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins. . . .

(9-11) O Thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high mountain; O Thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up Thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, *Behold your God! Behold the Lord Jehovah will come* as a mighty One, and *His arm will rule for Him: behold His reward is with Him,* and His recompense before Him. *He will feed His flock like a shepherd,* He will gather the lambs in His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young."

4. In the fourth place, We see the Importance of this doctrine in that, *"The Appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" at His Return and the events connected therewith are "the blessed hope" and "eager desire" of all intelligent and properly instructed believers.* This we see in Titus 2:13:

> *"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ* (English Revision and Greek)."

And we also see it in 2 Pet. 3:11, 12, as it is properly translated in the Revised Version:

> "Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, *looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God,* by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

6. In the sixth place, *We see the fundamental and vital Importance of the doctrine of our Lord's Return*

to this earth in that the fact of our Lord's Return to this earth is the great Bible argument for a life of watchfulness, fidelity and wisdom in service, untiring activity, self-sacrificing simplicity of life, continuous self-restraint, constant prayer and abiding in Christ. Time would fail us to quote all the passages that prove this, but take a few illustrations, Matt. 24:44-46:

> "Therefore *be ye also ready;* for in an hour that ye think not *the Son of man cometh.* Who then is *the faithful and wise servant,* whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord *when he cometh,* shall find so doing."

Read Luke 21:34-36:

> *"But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness,* and cares of this life, and *that day come on you suddenly* as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But *watch ye at every season,* making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to *stand before the Son of man."*

Now read what John says in 1 Jno. 2:28:

> "And now, my little children, *abide in Him;* that, *if He shall be manifested,* we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him *at His coming."*

At your leisure read the entire twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew and note carefully to what a great extent the Return of the Lord Jesus to this earth is empha-

sized as the one great motive of proper conduct in all the different phases of the Christian life. There can be no question in the mind of any one who candidly, carefully and thoroughly studies the Scriptures, that the one fact that is constantly urged by our Lord and by His apostles as an incentive to a watchful, faithful, wise, active, simple, temperate and prayerful life, is the fact that our Lord Jesus is some day coming back from heaven where He now is to this earth where we now are.

7. In the seventh place, *The Importance of the doctrine of the Coming again of our Lord Jesus to this earth is seen in the fact that, Our Lord Jesus Himself pronounced a special blessing upon all those servants whom He should find watching when He came again.* This we see in our Lord's Words in Luke 12:35-38:

> "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and be ye yourselves *like unto men looking for their lord,* when he shall return from the marriage feast; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may straightway open unto him. *Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching:* verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, *and find them so, blessed are those servants."*

I long to obtain for myself this especial and signal blessing that our Lord here promises to those who are

watching and eagerly waiting for His Coming, and I also earnestly desire that all who read this book may also obtain it.

During my first pastorate, the first Pre-Millennial Conference was held in New York. It was held in one of the Episcopal churches, the church of the elder Dr. Stephen Tyng. It awakened great interest, and the New York *Tribune* printed all the addresses in full. The chorister of my own church was the editor of the local paper and he read all the addresses in the New York *Tribune.* He came to me and said, "Will you not speak on the Second Coming of Christ?" I put him off as best I could, but I thought to myself, "It will be a long time before you hear me speaking on so impractical and visionary a subject as that of the Second Coming of Christ." I thank God, that the time came when I discovered that it was not an impractical doctrine, but on the contrary one of the most practical doctrines in the whole Bible, and this doctrine became not only a source of wonderful blessing in my own life, but a blessing to countless thousands around the world to whom it has been my privilege to proclaim this vitally important truth.

II. THE FACT OF THE RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS, THE CHRIST OF GOD, FROM HEAVEN WHERE HE NOW IS TO THIS EARTH WHERE HE ONCE WAS.

Now we come directly to the all important matter of *the Fact of the Return of the Lord Jesus, the Christ of God, from Heaven where He now is to this earth*

where He once was. This fact is announced over and over again in the Bible in the clearest, most definite, most positive and most unmistakable terms.

1. Jesus Himself announced it in John 14: 1-3:

> "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I come again,* and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

Our Lord Jesus had told His disciples that He was about to leave them, that the intimate, personal fellowship with Himself in the body which they had enjoyed for about four years, was about to come to an end, and that for some time they would see Him no more. "I am going (literal translation of Jno. 14:28)," He told them. "I am going away to Him that sent Me" (literal translation of Jno. 16:5), and sorrow filled their hearts (Jno. 16:5, 6). They were filled with consternation at the thought of His going away to Heaven and leaving them here on earth alone. Then Jesus spoke the wonderful words found in Jno. 14: 1-27 to comfort them and to deliver them from all fear. He prefaced these words by saying, "Let not your heart be troubled," and closed them by saying, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful." Almost the first thing He told them to cheer them and comfort them and deliver them from all fear, was that, although He was going, He was not going for good, that He was coming back to this earth. He said,

"Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I come again,* and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

2. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares the same thing. He says in Heb. 9:28:

"So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, *shall appear a second time,* apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation."

3. Paul declares the same great fact with some added details in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17:

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Paul, when he wrote these words, doubtless had in mind the words of Jesus which we have just read from John 14:1-3; for they cover exactly the same four points that Jesus' own words cover:

(1) The "I come again" of Jesus, parallels Paul's words, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven."

(2) The "Receive you unto Myself" that Jesus spoke exactly parallels Paul's "We . . . shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

(3) The words that Jesus spoke, "That where I am, there ye may be also" parallel exactly Paul's words, "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

(4) Jesus' words of comfort are preceded by the words, "Let not your heart be troubled," and this is exactly paralleled by verse eighteen of Paul's words where he says, "Comfort one another with these words." Furthermore Paul says in the immediately preceding verses, "This we say unto you *by the word of the Lord";* that is to say, he was quoting the Lord Jesus' own teaching.

Paul declares again this same great fact that Jesus, the Christ of God, is coming back from Heaven where He now is to this earth, in Phil. 3 : 20, 21 :

> "For our citizenship is *in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:* Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

4. Peter declares the same great fact that Jesus, the Christ of God, is coming back from Heaven where He now is to this earth, in Acts 3 : 19-21 :

> "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and *that He may send the Christ Who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things,* whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets that have been from of old."

So we have the united and unanimous testimony of Peter, the apostle to the Jews, and Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, and of Jesus Christ our Lord Himself, to the fact that some day our Lord, Who one day ascended from Mount Olivet into Heaven, is to return from Heaven, where He now is and has been since His Ascension, to this earth where He once was, when He walked the streets of Jerusalem and climbed the hills and sailed the waters of Galilee. Over and over again in these verses it is declared that *"the very same Jesus"* Who died on the cross, whose *body* was laid in Joseph's sepulcher, Whose body was raised from the dead, and Who was carried *bodily* "into Heaven," to the right hand of the Father, is coming back again to this earth, which He left forty days after His Resurrection. Not one of these predictions has as yet been fulfilled.

I will not waste your time with discussing the question whether these promises have not already been fulfilled in Jesus coming to the individual at the death of the individual believer, or in the coming of the Holy Spirit at the Day of Pentecost, or in His coming to the individual believer when he receives the Holy Spirit, Who forms within Him an indwelling Christ (which is of course a very real Coming of Christ, though clearly it is not at all the Coming of Christ promised in the passages which we have read), or in the Coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem. I say I will not waste your time with discussing these questions, whether these promises have not already been fulfilled in some one or all of the events mentioned, because those who once tried to take

the force out of these passages which I have quoted by interpretations of this character, have themselves largely given up the attempt as hopeless, and now content themselves either by saying frankly or by covertly implying that Paul and Peter and even Jesus Himself were mistaken in what they said. Furthermore, the utter impossibility of these interpretations will be clearly seen when we take up the next division of our subject, the Manner of Jesus Christ's Coming again.

III. THE MANNER OF THE RETURN OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE, FROM HEAVEN WHERE HE NOW IS TO THIS EARTH.

We come now to a consideration of the Manner of the Return of Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, from Heaven where He now is to this earth where we now are. Here again the Bible is as plain and as explicit and as definite as language can by any possibility make it; and, if we are willing to take the words of Jesus Himself and of His apostles, inspired of God (the accuracy of whose words as being Spirit taught and containing the full truth of God Jesus Himself endorsed), at their full face value (and this is the only honest and intelligent way of taking the words of any intelligent and honest person, and especially the words of our Divine Lord), there can be no mistaking what the truth is in this matter. The speculations and imaginings and maunderings of subtle theologians may be interesting and may also be in a measure helpful as a mental exercise, but THE ONLY THING ON A SUBJECT LIKE THIS THAT IS REALLY WORTH WHILE OR THAT GETS

ANYWHERE, IS WHAT GOD SAYS IN THE BOOK. Well, what does God say in the Book?

1. In the first place, as to the Manner of the Return of Jesus from Heaven where He now is to this earth, *Our Lord will come back to this earth again personally, the very same Jesus Who was received up from this earth into Heaven shall come back from Heaven to this earth.* This our Lord Himself declares in Jno. 14:3:

> "If I go and prepare a place for you, *I come again,* and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

Paul said it in so many words in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17:

> *"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven,* with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The two messengers in white whom God sent to cheer the apostles as they saw the Lord Jesus ascending into Heaven and leaving them behind here on earth, and a cloud receiving Him out of their sight, for a long, long time, said the same thing in Acts 1:9-11:

> "And when He (that is Jesus) had said these things, as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were looking stedfastly *into heaven as He went,* behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why

> stand ye looking *into heaven?* this Jesus, Who *was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven."*

It is evident from these, as well as from many other utterances in the Bible, that the Return of our Lord Jesus so frequently spoken of in the New Testament is not to be merely some new revelation of truth, or some great moral or religious reform or some ecstatic experience of the individual; *it is to be the Coming of a Person, of the very same Jesus Whom the disciples saw going into heaven. He shall come again,* "THE LORD HIMSELF *shall descend from heaven."* The claim is frequently made by the Christian Scientists that the revelation of Christian Science to Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy in 1876 was the Coming Again of Jesus Christ; but the passage just cited makes it clear as day that the Coming Again of Jesus Christ is not the mere revelation of truth to Mrs. Eddy (or to any one else), but the Coming of a Person, the very same Person Who was once here, and Who went into heaven, and is at present there.

2. In the second place, as to the Manner of our Lord Jesus' Coming back again, *Our Lord Jesus shall return to this earth in a visible, bodily form.* This also is clear from the words of the heavenly messengers which we just quoted. Let us read them again, Acts 1:9-11:

> "And when He (that is, Jesus) had said these things, *as they were looking,* He was taken up; and a cloud received Him *out of their sight.* And while they were *looking stedfastly into heaven* as

He went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? *this Jesus,* Who was received up from you into heaven, *shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven."*

Please note particularly the words "as *ye beheld Him* going into heaven." The Greek word translated "ye beheld" is a very strong intensive word meaning "to look stedfastly at with the eyes" ("such a looking as seeks a gratification of the sense of sight"), and IT CERTAINLY TEACHES BEYOND A POSSIBILITY OF HONEST DOUBT THAT JESUS IS COMING BACK IN A VISIBLE BODY THAT CAN BE SEEN WITH THE EYES.

Some years ago a new pastor was being installed in the First Congregational Church in Minneapolis. I was a member of the Installing Council. It was the custom in those days to carefully question the candidate for either ordination or installation as to his doctrinal views. I put to this particular candidate, who was a well known and gifted minister of the Gospel, the question, "Do you believe in the Personal, Visible, Bodily Return of our Lord Jesus to this earth?" He replied, "I do not." Then I asked him a second question "What do you do with Acts 1:11:

"'This Jesus, Who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven'?"*

He replied, "The words mean that He is coming with *equal certainty* as He went, but have nothing to do with the Manner of His coming." But such an

interpretation is absolutely impossible to any one who will examine the uniform usage and exact force of the Greek words used. The Greek words used do not admit of such an interpretation. Literally translated the Greek words would read, "This Jesus (and the emphasis is upon the *"This,"* thus emphasizing the fact that it was the very same Jesus Whom they had seen going, and not some other Jesus) Who was taken up from you into the heaven *thus* shall come *in the manner which* ye *beheld Him going* into the heaven." I have examined every passage in which the word translated "manner" is used, and it never means anything but the *"manner,"* it does not indicate mere *certainty* in one single instance; therefore these words as used here must describe the *"manner"* in which Jesus is coming and nothing else, and as the heavenly messengers declared, Jesus is coming "in the (exact) manner" that they *"beheld Him* going into heaven."

That the Coming Again of Jesus Christ will be in a visible bodily form is unmistakably clear also from Heb. 9:28:

> "So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, *shall appear* a second time."

The word translated "shall appear" in this verse means literally *"shall be seen."* The definition given of the Greek word here used by Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, the best authority extant, is, *"to see with the eyes."* It cannot mean anything else.

That Jesus is to come visibly and bodily is also as clear as words can make it in Rev. 1:7:

> "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and *every eye shall see Him,* and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him."

These words make it as clear as language can possibly make it, that our Lord's Return is not merely a spiritual coming (or Coming in the Spirit), but a *visible, bodily* Coming, so visible that at least at one stage of His Coming *"every eye shall see Him."* It is impossible to explain these words away and deal honestly with the Word of God.

I was speaking on the Second Coming of Christ one Sunday morning in the Moody Church in Chicago. I had among my hearers one of Pastor Russell's teachers of his Millennial Dawn Vagaries. At the close of the address this teacher stopped me and said, "Mr. Torrey, you don't believe, do you, that Jesus is so coming that we can see Him with these eyes of ours?" I replied, "It does not make a particle of difference what I believe, but it makes all the difference in the world what God says. Let me show you just what God says," and I opened my Bible to Rev. 1:7:

> "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and *every eye shall see Him,* and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him."

He had nothing more to say. What more was there to say? "Pastor Russell's" theory regarding the Coming of our Lord in October, 1874, will not bear any careful examination, nor will the theories of any

one else who denies the actual, literal, bodily, visible Return of our Lord Jesus to this earth.

3. In the third place, *The Return of the Lord Jesus, the true Christ, the Christ of God, from heaven to this earth shall be with great publicity.* This fact Jesus Himself made clear and declared with great emphasis in Matt. 24:26, 27:

> "If therefore they shall say unto you, *Behold, He is in the wilderness;* go not forth: Behold, He is *in the inner chambers; believe it not.* For *as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man.*"

We are constantly being told by modern errorists of one kind or another that the Lord Jesus has already come in some "inner chamber," or in some obscure corner, of the earth. For example, "Pastor Russell" taught, and the Millennial Dawnists still teach, that Christ came in October, 1874; the "Christian Scientists" would have us believe that He came in Concord to Mrs. Eddy in the Revelation of "Science and Health"; "The Flying Roll" advocates say that He come in "Prince Michael"; others teach that He came in Schweinfurth; others that He came in Dora Beekman; others that He came in "Cyrus" Teed. Since I have been in Los Angeles two different persons, a picture of one of whom I have stowed away in my office closet, were claimed to be the Christ come back to earth and that He was soon to be manifested, one of them in the Mojave Desert and the other somewhere else. But all these "Inner Chamber Christs" and "Obscure Corner Christs" are a humbug; and they were

predicted and exposed by our Lord Jesus Himself centuries ago.

Even at His Coming for His saints to take them up to be with Himself, it seems that there will be a large measure of publicity about it, since Paul describes it in these words:

> "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, *with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:* and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

There does not seem to be any room here for the doctrine, so widely taught, of the Secret Rapture of Believers. We shall be taken up with a large measure of publicity; and there is reason to hope that those left behind will be so impressed that many of them will be converted.

4. In the fourth place, *At His Return from heaven to this earth the Son of man is coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* This our Lord Himself declares in Matt. 24: 30:

> "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man *coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*"

The question will naturally arise, What does the statement that He is "coming on the clouds of heaven," signify? It signifies that *He is coming as an unmistakably Divine Person and not merely as a man.* The

only One Whom the Bible ever represents as coming "in (or, on) the clouds" is the Eternal, Almighty Jehovah. I will not take the space to quote in full the passages. You can look them up for yourselves. They are Ex. 19:9; 34:5; Ps. 97: 1, 2; Matt. 17:5; Ps. 104:3; Isa. 19:1.

It is evident from all these passages that it was Jehovah Who came "in (or, on) the clouds," He, and He alone; and, therefore, to say that our Lord Jesus is "coming in (or, on) the clouds," is equivalent to saying that He is coming as the Divine One, or coming in fully manifested Divine Glory. The high priest in whose presence our Lord Jesus said that He was "coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64), fully recognized that Jesus, by saying this, was proclaiming His real and full Deity, for we read in the next verse, "Then the high priest rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy."

When Jesus came before, He came as the helpless Babe of Bethlehem for Whom there was no room in the inn, He was born in a cow stable and cradled in a manger; but when He comes again He will come as God clearly manifested, riding in the chariot of God, the clouds (compare Ps. 104:3).

And He is coming also, as the verse we are studying declares, *"with power and great glory."* I was once speaking on the Second Coming of Christ at Northfield, in the Auditorium. While I was speaking very black clouds had gathered over Northfield and right over the Auditorium. I had just read Matt. 24:30, and said in commenting upon it that Jesus is coming again with "power and great glory." Just then, in an

instant, the room was filled with blinding light and there was immediately a deafening crash of thunder. The lightning had struck the building where we were gathered and went all over the wires. People sprang to their feet and some shrieked. I said, "Oh, sit down. There is nothing to be afraid of. This is nothing to what it will be when the Lord Jesus actually comes again." I looked down to my left; and there, seated very calmly and very radiant, was a little elderly woman, Mr. Moody's oldest sister. Her face was a picture. It was filled not with fear, but with ecstatic exultation. When I went down and spoke to her at the close of the address she said, "Oh, Mr. Torrey, I was so happy, it was the happiest moment of my life, I thought that Jesus had really come." And for years afterward whenever I met her she would refer to that day.

5. In the fifth place, *At the Return from heaven to this earth of the Lord Jesus He is coming in the glory of His Father, accompanied by the "holy angels" as His triumphal train.* This Jesus Himself declares. You will find His words in Matt. 16:27:

> "For the Son of man *shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels;* and then shall He render unto every man according to His deeds."

He said it again in Mark 8:38:

> "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when *He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.*"

Paul refers to the same fact in 2 Thess. 1:7:

"And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the *revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power.*"

When He came before He came in great humiliation. He had "emptied Himself" of His Divine glory, He had laid aside "the form of God" and taken the "form of a servant," and had been "made in the likeness of men." They did with Him whatsoever they pleased: they mocked Him; they blindfolded Him; they spit upon Him; they scourged Him; they nailed Him to the cross and derided Him; but when He comes again He will come with all the glory, all the visible glory of Deity and all the wondrously glorious hosts of heaven will follow in His train.

When Mrs. Torrey and I were in India in 1902 they were preparing for Emperor Edward's Durbar and Mrs. Torrey went up to Jaipur to see the preliminary processions of the Durbar. She came back with wonderful stories of Rajahs and Maharajahs and other dignitaries, clad in cloth of gold, and even of elephants arrayed with golden garments, and of unparalleled splendor of all kinds. But the most glorious Durbar or Coronation that there has ever been on this earth was nothing at all in comparison with the glory of the countless hosts who will accompany our Lord in that great and glad Coming Day when He descends from heaven to this earth.

6. In the sixth place, *At our Lord's return from heaven to earth our Lord Jesus is coming as a thief, that is, He is coming without announcement, without warning, unexpectedly, suddenly.* This He says in Rev. 16: 15:

"Behold, I come *as a thief*. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth His garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Paul indicates the same thing in 1 Thess. 5:2, 3:

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh *as a thief in the night*. When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape."

We should bear in mind that there will be different stages in our Lord's Return to this earth. I will not take the time to quote the Scriptures now for we shall have occasion to refer to them later, but you can look them up for yourselves, 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; Matt. 25:31, 32; 2 Thess. 2:2, 7; Zech. 14:4, 5.

The first stage will be when the Lord comes in the air, whither His believing people will be caught up to meet Him; the second stage will be when the Lord comes to the earth. In this latter stage His saints will come with Him (1 Thess. 3:13; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:14). In the air Christ comes *for* His own: to the earth He comes *with* His own. For anything we are told in the Bible, a considerable interval may take place between these two stages of our Lord's coming. However, the Coming of our Lord in the air for His saints and His Coming to the earth with His saints are not two Comings of our Lord, but two stages in His one Coming. His Coming to the earth *with* His saints is the culmination of His Coming in the air *for* His saints. It will help us solve the many seeming discrepancies in the many passages of the Bible that

deal with this subject, if we will keep constantly in mind this distinction between the Lord Coming in the air *for* His saints and His Coming to the earth *with* His saints.

The third stage will be a succession of events which will follow His Coming to the earth. This stage in our Lord's Coming will cover a long period of years.

IV. THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE, FROM HEAVEN WHERE HE NOW IS TO THIS EARTH WHERE WE NOW ARE AND WHERE HE ONCE WAS.

We come now to a careful consideration of The Results of The Return of the Lord Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, from Heaven where He now is to this Earth where we now are and where He once was, as these results are set forth in the Word of God. We shall find that these Results are very wonderful and such as to fill our heart with great joy and immeasurable and well-grounded hope. These Results naturally divide themselves into six classes:

First, The Results of the Return of the Lord Jesus as regards the Church, i.e., all who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and surrendered to Him as their Lord and Master and confessed Him as such before the world before He comes.

Second, The Results of the Return of the Lord Jesus as regards Israel.

Third, The Results of the Return of the Lord Jesus as regards the Gentile Nations and unregenerate individuals.

Fourth, The Results of the Return of the Lord Jesus as regards the Anti-Christ and the Devil.

Fifth, The Results of the Return of the Lord Jesus as regards human society as a whole.

Sixth, The Results of the Return of the Lord Jesus as regards the physical universe.

1. First then let us consider, THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH AS REGARDS THE CHURCH.

They will be manifold.

(1) In the first place, *At the Return of the Lord Jesus from Heaven to Earth the Bodies of All those Believers in Christ who have died before He comes back will be raised from the Dead.* This the Apostle Paul declares in the plainest possible terms in 1 Thess. 4:13-16:

> "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

We see here that the bodies of our friends who have

departed from this life before He comes will be raised from the dead at the Return of the Lord Jesus; that before He reaches this earth, while He is still in the air on His way here, their bodies will be raised.

Where at the present time are our departed friends who really believed in Jesus Christ? This the Word of God tells us plainly: it tells us that their spirits are with Christ in Paradise, but that their bodies are in the grave or crumbled into the dust from which they were originally made, our loved ones at the present time are *"absent from the body,* but *at home with the Lord."* Let me read you 2 Cor. 5: 1-8:

> "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle (*that is, our present bodies*) be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands (*that is, our resurrection bodies*), eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this (that is, in this present earthly body which we now have), we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven (that is, our resurrection body): if so be it that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed (that is, merely put aside our earthly bodies), but that we would be clothed upon (that is, receive our resurrection bodies), that what is mortal (our present body) may be swallowed up of life. Now He that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the

> body (that is, while our spirits still dwell in this present, earthly body), we are absent from the Lord (He being up yonder in heaven and we being down here) (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be *absent from the body,* and to be *at home with the Lord."*

The meaning of this is perfectly plain and unmistakable. It tells us that there are three states in which believers exist: First, our present state in which our spirits dwell in our present, mortal bodies; Second, the state between the time of our death and the Return of the Lord Jesus, when our spirits are unclothed, that is, are no longer clothed upon with our present mortal body; Third, our final state of perfected blessedness, in which our spirits will be clothed upon with our resurrection bodies. That for which the intelligent believer longs is the third state, when not only his redeemed spirit is with Jesus Christ, but when his redeemed spirit is clothed upon with his redeemed body and both spirit and body shall be with Jesus Christ.

But while this third state is what the believer longs for, while that is his final hope; still, if he is properly instructed, he knows that the second state, the state where the spirit is disrobed from his body and is present with the Lord, is better than the state in which we now are, though not so good as the ultimate state that shall be ours at the return of our Lord. The moment the believer in Christ falls asleep in Christ (or what men call "dies"), his spirit departs to be with Christ in conscious and very great blessedness. As Paul puts it in Phil. 1:23:

> "But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; *for it is very far better.*"

That is to say that the state where we are "absent from the body and present with the Lord" "is very far better" than our present state. For his own sake Paul desired to depart and be with Christ, which was "very far better," but for the sake of the believers in Philippi he desired to remain in the body, because that was "more needful for" them. (Phil. 1:24).

The spirits of those who have already departed from the body are happy now, exceedingly happy, far happier than they ever were on earth; but they have not attained unto their full reward and supreme blessedness. They will receive that when the Lord Jesus comes back again from heaven to earth, when their bodies shall be raised and they shall be clothed upon with their resurrection bodies, and not only their spirits but also their bodies, shall be with Christ Jesus.

(2) In the second place, *At the Return of the Lord Jesus to this earth, the Bodies of those Believers in Him who are still living, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"* (1 Cor. 15:52) *shall be transformed and glorified, transformed into the Likeness of the Body which* Jesus Christ now has in the Glory. This Paul tells us in Phil. 3:20, 21:

> "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

In our present life, as soon as we accept Jesus Christ we get great peace, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding," (Phil. 4:6, 7), and great joy, even "joy unspeakable and full of glory," (1 Pet. 1:8). Ah, but that is nothing to the joy we shall have when He comes back again. In spite of all the joy we have in Christ Jesus in the life that now is, because of the limitations and frailties of these mortal bodies of ours, *"We groan* within ourselves, *waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"* (Rom. 8:23). When Jesus comes again we shall have at once the "redemption of our bodies," we shall have our glorified bodies, the bodies that are the perfect counterpart of our redeemed spirits that inhabit them; we shall have then bodies not subject to suffering and pain and weakness and decay and dissolution, but incorruptible, glorious, heavenly bodies, bodies like unto His Own. In that day "our adoption," i.e., our placing as sons, our *outward manifestation* as sons of God, shall be complete, in the redemption of the body as well as of the spirit. We shall have bodies, but bodies which are unlike our present bodies, bodies not subject to the aches and pains and weaknesses to which our present bodies are subject, bodies that shall in no sense be a hindrance to us in our work, but rather the perfect instruments for the carrying out of every purpose of the redeemed spirits that inhabit them, *bodies like unto His Own glorious body.* These bodies are no longer to be held down to this earth; we shall have no need of aeroplanes, but these bodies "shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air" and "be forever with" Him.

(3) In the third place, *At the Return of our Lord*

Jesus, before He reaches the earth, while He is still in the air on His way here, all believers in Him, both those still living, and those who have fallen asleep but who are now raised, shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, to be forever with Him. This Paul tells us "by the Word of the Lord" in 1 Thess. 4: 15-17:

> "For this we say unto you *by the word of the Lord,* that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, *shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*"

The Greek word translated "caught up" in this passage is a very strong word and means, "to carry away by force." We shall be snatched away from this world that is to be for a time visited with awful judgments, we shall be carried away before these judgments break upon this world. It is the Returning Lord Jesus Himself Who puts forth the Divine power that carries us up out of the doom and desolation and untold and unparalleled misery that is for several years to be visited upon this Christ-rejecting world. This we learn from our Lord's Own Words in John 14: 1-3:

> "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and *will receive you unto myself;* that where I am, there ye may be also."

The Greek word translated "receive" in this passage is a word full of deepest significance. It is a compound word, compounded of a verb which means "to take with the hand" or "to lay hold of" or "to take in order to carry away," and a preposition which means "alongside of" or "with," and so the compound word means "to carry away to be with oneself." (Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament gives as the first meaning of the word "to take to, to take with oneself, to win to oneself.") So the thought is, that before the Great Tribulation breaks on this earth, our Lord Jesus on His way to this earth, will put forth His hand (or, His Divine power) and take us away out of the world and its doom to be with Himself. As we shall see later, when "the Tribulation" culminates, He will come to the earth, to the complete deliverance of Israel, and bring us with Him to participate in His glorious reign.

(4) In the fourth place, *At the Return of our Lord to this Earth, when He is manifest in His Full Glory, Believers in Him shall be made like Him as a Result of their Seeing Him as He is.* This we are told in 1 Jno. 3:2:

> "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if *He shall be manifested,* we shall be like Him; for *we shall see Him even as He is.*"

This is one of the most precious promises in the whole Word of God. I have sometimes thought that it

was the most wonderful and the very best of all. Think of it, "WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM"—! like Him not only in physical appearance and outward glory, but like Him intellectually and morally. Beholding our Lord as He really is, not in His veiled glory (as He was manifested here on earth), but in the full unveiling of His glory, will transform us into the very Image of the Lord. Even in the present life, looking at Him makes us like Him. "We . . . beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:18). But now we see through a glass darkly, and so our reflection of His glory is imperfect; then we shall see Him face to face, in His undimmed glory, and shall perfectly reflect it in our own persons. This is one of the most amazing statements in the Word of God. It seems too good to be true, but it is true; for God Himself says it. In this present life we are struggling hard to be like Him, but there is a very wide gulf between the intellectual and moral and spiritual attainment of the best of earthly saints and the infinitely and absolutely perfect wisdom and character of our Lord Jesus Himself. At His coming again, the weakest and most halting and most hesitating of His people will be transformed into His Own perfect likeness, "we shall be (just) like Him."

In 2 Thess. 1:10. We are told that the Lord Jesus "shall come to be *glorified in His saints,* and to be *marvelled at in* all *them that believed.*" Notice carefully it does not say, "To be glorified *by* His saints," but "*in*" them, and not "to be marvelled at *by* His saints,"

but "to be marvelled at *in* all them that believed." That is to say, it is because of the reflection of His glory in us, that He is to be "glorified *in*" us, "and to be marvelled at in" us. We shall so perfectly reflect His Glory, not merely the outward glory of His external appearance, but the inward glory of His moral character, that He will be glorified in what we then are. From most of us He gets very little glory from what we now are, but from the weakest of us He shall get great glory as we shall then be. In a similar way we are told in Col. 3:4, R.V., that:

> *"When Christ,* who is our life, *shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory."*

In that day, not only shall He be seen in His perfect Divine glory, but we also shall be seen in glory, our bodies shall be glorious, but better still, our characters shall be glorious. WE SHALL BE JUST LIKE HIM. He will transform us into His Own perfect Image. Then all our strugglings after Holiness shall have perfect fruition. So we read in 1 Thess. 5:23:

> "And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

(5) In the fifth place, *At the Return of the Lord Jesus, the Church, the Betrothed Bride of Jesus Christ, shall be united in marriage with Him, and shall share with Him in the Delights and Glories of the Marriage Supper.* This we see in Matt. 25:10 compared with Rev. 19:7-9:

> "And while they went away to buy, *the bride-*

groom came; and they that were ready went in with Him *to the marriage feast.*"

"Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto Him; for *the marriage of the Lamb is come,* and His wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And He said unto me, Write, *Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb.* And He saith unto me, These are true words of God."

All that that may mean we cannot now fathom, but it means glory and joy beyond any power of human expression or human conception. Even those who "are invited to the marriage supper" are "blessed," but how much more blessed the bride herself!

At that marriage of the Church to Himself Jesus Christ will "*present the Church to Himself a glorious Church,* not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." This we are told in so many words in Eph. 5:25-27.

(6) In the sixth place, *At the Return of the Lord Jesus, all those who have loved His appearing shall receive a crown of righteousness.* This we are told in 2 Tim. 4:7, 8:

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me *the crown of righteousness,* which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day; and *not to me only, but also to all them that have loved His appearing.*"

We will not stop to dwell upon all the significance of this, but it certainly ought to lead every one of us who think we love the Lord Jesus Christ to ask ourselves very seriously and earnestly, Do I really *"love His appearing,"* am I really longing for His Return, and is this "crown of righteousness" which He is to give at His Return to those "who have loved His appearing" to be mine?

(7) In the seventh place, *At the Return of our Lord from Heaven to this Earth and His consequent Victory over His Enemies, His believing people shall live and reign with Him.* This we are told in Rev. 20:4:

> "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and such as worship not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and their hand; and *they live, and reign with Christ a thousand years.*"

This verse seems to refer primarily to the Tribulation saints but by implication it refers to all believers. Certainly a bride must reign with her husband. Furthermore, the fact that we shall reign is clearly set forth in Rev. 5:9, 10:

> "And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the Book and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men (out) of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom

and priests; and *they reign upon the earth.*"

When Jesus comes back from heaven to earth, He shall sit upon the throne and reign over all the earth. At that time there shall be what the kings of the earth have long striven after, but never attained unto, an absolutely universal kingdom. But not only so, but His Church, i.e., all believers in this present Dispensation, shall reign with Him; the Church, the Bride of Christ, shall reign jointly with the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ Himself, "The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." There is no earthly monarch ruling on earth to-day (nor has there ever been an earthly monarch at any time) that has the glory or the power that the humblest believer in Christ will have after the Lord Jesus returns with us to this earth. Of His Coming to reign we are told in the Old Testament also, e.g., in Jer. 23: 5, 6:

> "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and He shall reign as King and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness."

Such shall be His reign, and the Church, which is His Bride, is to reign with Him. As we have said, we shall be kings; and no earthly monarch, even the most magnificent this old world has ever seen, ever had such glory as shall be ours in that day. Do not talk to me about, or try to tempt me with, the splendors of multi-millionaires, or of the great potentates of this earth.

Bah, that is nothing to what I am to have, and I am willing in the meantime, if it be God's will, to live for a few years in a cottage, or even a shanty, here on earth, *until He comes.*

2. Now let us look at, THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH OF THE LORD JESUS AS REGARDS ISRAEL.

(1) In the first place, *In connection with the Return of the Lord Jesus, the children of Judah and Israel, the whole twelve tribes who have been scattered far and wide among the Nations, shall be gathered from the four corners of the Earth and brought back into their own land, the land of which Jerusalem is the political center.*

This is clearly indicated in a number of passages. Read Isa. 11:11, 12:

> "And it shall come to pass *in that day,* that the Lord will set His hand again the second time *to recover the remnant of His people,* that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble *the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the disbursed* of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

Some think that there is to be a separate history in the future for the ten tribes that were scattered abroad and for the two tribes, when Jesus returns. But we are clearly taught in this passage that such is not the case.

Now read Ezek. 36:24:

> "For I will take you from among the nations,

and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land."

Now turn to the next chapter, Ezek. 37:21:

"And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land."

(2) In the second place, *As a Result of Jesus, the Messiah, Coming Back to this Earth, He will deliver Israel in the day when the trials and sufferings of centuries shall have culminated in the last, the Great, Tribulation.* We have a picture of this in Zech. 14:1-4:

"Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. *Then shall Jehovah go forth and fight against those nations,* as when He fought in the day of battle. And *His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives,* which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."

The people of Israel have known dark days in the past, and the present days are very dark for Israel,

but still darker days are coming, the culmination of Jehovah's judgment on Israel for all her unfaithfulness to Him, and especially for her rejection of the Messiah at His first coming, but those dark days shall be short; for in the very hour when the blackest midnight of despair has settled down upon Israel and all nations are gathered against them, and there seems to be no hope, then Jehovah in the Person of the Lord Jesus shall Himself come to deliver and to give them victory over all their enemies.

(3) In the third place, *At the Return of our Lord Jesus in His Glory to the deliverance of His people, Israel shall recognize Him as their God for Whom they have waited, and there shall be gladness and joy among His people Israel.* This we are told in Isa. 25:9:

> "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, *this is our God;* we have waited for Him, and He will save us: *this is Jehovah;* we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

While this passage can hardly be absolutely limited to Israel, the context clearly shows that the primary reference is to them (cf. vs. 10-12).

At this time of our Lord's Return to the Deliverance of His people, and as a result of His Return and of that deliverance which He shall bring, every Israelite then living upon the earth shall be brought to repentance and shall be saved.

This we are told in Rom. 11:25-27:

> "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in;* and

so *all Israel shall be saved:* even as it is written,

There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer;
He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:
And this is My covenant unto them,
When I shall take away their sins."

At the present day, saved Jews are in a great minority among the Jewish people: "In that day," all Jews shall be saved; every member of Israel and of Judah shall be saved. We find the same thought in the Old Testament also, read Jer. 23:5, 6:

> "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and He shall reign as king and deal wisely, and He shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In His days *Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely;* and this is His name whereby He shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness."

In this present Dispensation we preach the Gospel to the Jews and save a Jew here and there, but the saved are a very small minority, but in that day all Jews shall be saved. *There will not be one unsaved Jew or Israelite in all the earth.*

(4) In the fourth place, *In connection with the Return of our Lord and His deliverance of His earthly people, Israel shall be cleansed from all their filthiness and of all their idolatry, and of all their transgressions; a new heart will be given unto them, and a new spirit put within them, the stony heart shall be taken away from them and they shall be given a heart of flesh. God will put His Spirit within them and cause them to walk in His statutes and they shall keep His Judgments and do them.* This we read in Ezek. 37:23:

"Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be My people, and I will be their God."

We read words of a similar import in Ezek. 36:25-29:

"And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you;* and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. *And I will put My Spirit within you,* and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep Mine ordinances, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the grain, and I will multiply it, and lay no famine upon you."

This same great truth is found in other words in Jer. 31:31-34:

"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant *with the house of Israel,* and *with the house* of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was a Husband unto them, saith Je-

hovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: *I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it;* and I will be their God, and they shall be My people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for *they shall all know me,* from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more."

(5) In the fifth place, *In connection with the Return of our Lord Jesus and as the outcome of the Salvation of Israel by Him at that time, Israel shall be wondrously multiplied and the waste and desolate and ruined cities shall be rebuilt and the desolate lands shall be made like the garden of Eden. There shall be abundance of prosperity and gladness on every hand; Jerusalem shall be called the "City of Truth."* This we are told over and over again in the prophets. Read for example Jer. 31:27:

"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of men, and with the seed of beast."

This of course sets forth a great multiplication of men and animals in the land of Israel at that time. Read also Ezek. 36:33-38:

"Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In the day that *I cleanse you from all your iniquities,* I *will cause the cities to be inhabited,* and *the waste places shall be builded.* And *the land that was desolate shall*

be tilled, whereas *it was a desolation* in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, *this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden;* and *the waste and desolate and ruined cities* are *fortified and inhabited.* Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I, Jehovah, have builded the ruined places, and *planted that which was desolate:* I, Jehovah, have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: for this, moreover, will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: *I will increase them with men like a flock.* As the flock for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be *filled with flocks of men;* and they shall know that I am Jehovah."

Read also Zech. 8: 3-5:

"Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and *Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth;* and the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts, The Holy mountain. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And *the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."*

The Israelites are to-day, taken as a whole, the saddest people on earth, but on that day they shall be the gladdest people on earth.

(6) In the sixth place, *Because of the Return of our Lord Jesus and the Deliverance He brings to His*

earthly people, Israel shall be greatly exalted above the Nations. This we are told in Zech. 8:23:

> "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: *In those days* it shall come to pass, that *ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations,* they *shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew,* saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

Nowadays they throw the Jew out by his coat collar: in those days they will hold on to him by his coat tails.

Read also Isa. 49:22, 23:

> "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and set up My ensign to the peoples; and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And *kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers:* they shall *bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah; and they that wait for Me shall not be put to shame.*"

The Jew is to-day a sneer and a byword among the peoples, but in that day Israel shall be exalted above all the nations of the earth. To-day the Gentiles run away from the Jews, if a Jew moves into any neighborhood that neighborhood is doomed; but in that day all nations will run after the Jews.

It is quite the custom among Christian people to take all these wonderful Old Testament predictions concerning the future glory of Israel and spiritualize them and apply them to the Church. That can only

be done by a process of violent distortion of the plain Word of God, by a method of interpretation which, if applied to other portions of the Bible, would utterly befog their plainly intended meaning and make them mean anything we chose. Christians have been perfectly willing to let the Jew, or the Israelite, have all the curses pronounced upon them in the Bible, and which have been so wonderfully fulfilled and are being so wondrously fulfilled to-day. But they want to keep all the future blessings of Israel, equally plainly predicted in the Word of God, and appropriate them to themselves. It will be a great thing to be a Jew in that day. The Jews will be God's earthly people. There will be only one thing better than to be one of God's earthly people, *and that is to be one of God's heavenly people,* the Church, by having accepted Christ before He comes to receive His Church to Himself. Both the Jews and the Gentiles who have accepted Jesus as Christ before that day, will belong to His heavenly people, the Church.

(7) In the seventh place, *After the Coming Again of our Lord Jesus Christ and as a Result of His blessing and glorifying Israel, Israel shall go forth as preachers of the glory of Jehovah to all nations.* This we are told in Isa. 66:19:

> "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them (that is of Israel) unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare My glory among the nations."

The greatest period of missionary activity and achievement in the world's history lies in the future. It will be in connection with the Return of our Lord, and the Jews will be the missionaries. The world has seen in the case of Saul, transformed into Paul the Apostle, what one converted Jew can do. The world is waiting to see what a whole nation of converted Jews can do.

3. We come now to, THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS AS REGARDS THE GENTILE NATIONS AND UNREGENERATE INDIVIDUALS.

(1) In the first place, *At the Return of our Lord Jesus all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him.* This we read in Matt. 24:30:

> "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with great power and great glory."

In a similar way we are told in Rev. 1:7:

> "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him."

The day of our Lord's Return will be the gladdest day they ever knew for all His people, but it will be the saddest day they ever knew for those who are not His people.

(2) In the second place, *When the Lord Jesus comes back to this Earth with His Angels, and with His people, all nations then living upon the Earth shall*

be gathered before Him for judgment and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats, the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left hand. This we are told in Matt. 25:31-33:

> "But when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left."

This passage is sometimes taken to refer to the judgment of the living nations *as nations,* but from a careful study of the entire passage one will clearly see that it will be *a judgment of individuals in the nations.* It is furthermore to be noted, that it is not said that this occurs immediately upon the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth.

(3) In the third place, *At the Return of Jesus Christ to this Earth He shall render vengeance to those who know not God and who have not obeyed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they shall "suffer punishment, even eternal destruction, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His power."* This we are told in 2 Thess. 1:7-9:

> "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus:

who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might."

This is the great Bible argument for accepting Christ at once. As Jesus Himself put it in Matt. 24:44:

"Therefore be ye also ready; for at an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh."

(4) In the fourth place, *At the Coming again of the Lord Jesus there will be a great turning to God among the Gentile peoples.* This we are told in Acts 15:16, 17:

"*After these things* I will return,
And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen;
And I will build again the ruins thereof,
And I will set it up:
That the residue of men may seek after the Lord,
And all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called."

This same truth is hinted at in various places in Scripture, for example in Isa. 2:2, 3:

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and *all nations shall flow unto it.* And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

Read also Zech. 8:20-23:

> "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

We are told distinctly in the New Testament that if the temporary rejection of Israel made a place for the receiving of the Gentiles, and thus became "the riches of the world," the restoration of Israel shall "much more" bring blessing to the Gentile nations. Here are Paul's own words as found in Rom. 11:11, 12:

> "I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; *how much more their fulness?*"

The question of course arises, If Christ immediately after His coming gathers the nations and Jews and separates them and consigns them to their eternal destiny, how can there come a conversion of nations that are still unconverted at the time of His coming?

The answer to this question is simple: The Bible nowhere says that "*immediately* after" His coming the nations will be gathered, judged, separated and consigned to their eternal destiny. Our whole difficulty, as well as many of our other difficulties, arises from the fact that we assume what the Bible never asserts (nor even in any way implies), namely, that the things connected with the coming of our Lord are all crowded into a single day or a few days or even a year. *These events are connected with and result from His coming, but they take time for their development.* Therefore things that appear to plainly contradict one another, do not contradict one another at all if we only bear in mind *exactly* what the Bible says about what is to occur, *and do not add to what is actually written* some opinion of our own. It is clearly evident from many Scriptures that, while the Bible does assert that those who reject Christ in this present dispensation, those who "know not God and obey not the Gospel," shall be "punished with everlasting destruction" at the coming of the Lord, it is also plainly evident that at some point after His coming there will be a conversion, not only of the Jewish people, but, through Jewish instrumentality, of many Gentiles and apparently of whole Gentile nations. This may, however, be largely or entirely from the nations not as yet thoroughly evangelized. What we are most concerned about are the facts, and not the exact order of the facts, nor the philosophy of the facts. The prophecies regarding His coming no more intend to give us a definite and detailed history in their exact order of all the events connected with our Lord's Return than other prophe-

cies in the Bible give us a definite and detailed history in their exact order of the events predicted. The prophecies in the Old Testament concerning His first coming to die an atoning sacrifice, do not give a definite and detailed history in the exact order of the events connected with His first Coming. The great, important facts which it is necessary we should know in order to keep us watching and to cheer our hearts and fire us for our work, are given *in outline. We should always remember in studying prophecy, that while prophecy is exactly and literally true in every word, that prophecy is not history, and often in the prophetical perspective, events that are widely separated from one another in time, are mentioned together.* For example, we are told in 2 Tim. 4: 1, that Jesus Christ is coming again "to judge the living and the dead"; but we also know by comparison with other Scriptures that the judgment of the dead is separated from the judgment of the living by a thousand years. (See also Isa. 61: 1, 2; cp. Luke 4: 18-20).

4. Now let us look at, THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN TO THIS EARTH OF JESUS CHRIST AS REGARDS THE ANTI-CHRIST, AND THE DEVIL.

(1) In the first place, *When the Lord Jesus comes back to the earth with His saints, the Anti-Christ, who has exerted tremendous power and to whom all the nations of the earth have become subject, shall be slain (more literally, taken away or abolished) by the breath of Christ's mouth and brought to nought (more exactly, rendered inoperative) by the manifestation of His coming.* This we learn from 2 Thess. 2: 3-8:

"Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the *lawless one* whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming."

There are many anti-christs to-day (1 Jno. 2: 18), many that set themselves up against Jesus, the true Christ, the Christ of the Bible; but there is to be one great Anti-christ, in whom all these lesser anti-christs will head up. This great Anti-christ, *the* Anti-christ, "the Prince that shall come," of whom Daniel speaks in Dan. 9: 26, 27, will have in the years just preceding the coming of Christ to the earth with His saints (not preceding His coming in the air for His saints, who shall be caught up into the air and shall be there during the period of the Anti-christ's activity on earth, but before His coming to the earth with His saints) shall have a period of great triumph and wide recognition and dominion. But his day will be brief and end in his utter confusion and overthrow by the coming of our Lord Jesus, and the earth shall be delivered from

his awful dominion. The awful doom that will overtake the Anti-christ and his armies is described in Rev. 19: 19, 20:

> "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat upon the horse, and against His army. And the best was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone."

The story of his doom is completed in Rev. 20: 10:

> "And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, *where are also the beast and the false prophet* (we see from the context that they had already been there a thousand years); and they shall be tormented *day and night for ever and ever.*

(2) Now let us look at what happens to the Devil. *As a Result of our Lord's Return the Devil will be chained and cast into the abyss for a thousand years and then after a little space of liberty, be "cast into the lake of fire" where he, together with the beast and false prophet, "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* This we are told in Rev. 20: 1-3 and Rev. 20: 10. Read first Rev. 20: 1-3:

> "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and

Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years shall be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time."

Now we turn, to see his final destiny, to the tenth verse of the same chapter, Rev. 20: 10:

"And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

5. Now let us look at, THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN TO THIS EARTH OF OUR LORD AS REGARDS HUMAN SOCIETY AS A WHOLE.

(1) In the first place, *As a Result of the Return of our Lord Jesus the kingdom of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever.* This we are told in Rev. 11: 15:

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever."

In the Old Testament we read of the extent of Messiah's Kingdom in that day in Zech. 9: 10:

"And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and He shall speak peace unto the nations: and *His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.*"

Of the beneficent character of His reign we read in the 45th. and 72nd. Psalms as well as elsewhere.

(2) In the second place, *As a Result of our Lord's Return and His Universal Reign that follows it, wars shall cease, peace and plenty shall reign and the righteous shall flourish.* This we are told in Isa. 2:4:

> "And He will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Along the same line we read in Micah 4:3:

> "And He will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

All the Versailles Conferences and "International Courts" will not bring abiding peace among nations, but the Return of the Lord Jesus will. We are told something still further regarding His reign on earth in Psa. 72:7, 8, 16:

> "In His day shall the righteous flourish,
> And abundance of peace, till the moon be no more.
> He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,
> And from the River unto the ends of the earth . . . (16)
> There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the tops of the mountains;

> The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon:
> And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

(3) In the third place, *The Earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea.* This God tells us in Isa. 11:9:

> "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea."

True knowledge and knowledge of the highest sort, the knowledge of Jehovah, shall abound everywhere. There will be universal knowledge and universal righteousness. All social problems shall be solved; righteousness shall triumph in every land and on every hand.

The day of our Lord's Return and reign will indeed be "the Golden Age" of this earth. It will realize all and far more than all that has ever been dreamed of by poets and social philosophers. We may well cry, "Amen, come, Lord Jesus."

6. Now let us consider, THE RESULTS OF THE RETURN OF THE LORD OF THIS EARTH AS REGARDS THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE.

(1) First of all, *As a Result of the Return of our Lord Jesus the physical Creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, to which it is now subject, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. Thorns and briars and carnage shall be no more: the wilderness and solitary places shall be glad and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose.* This we are told in Rom. 8:19-21:

"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

We have another glimpse of that day in Isa. 55:13:

"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Read also Isa. 65:25:

"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith Jehovah."

Read Isa. 32:15:

"Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest."

Once more let me read Isa. 35:1:

"The wilderness and the dry lands shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose."

The Return of the Lord Jesus to this earth will do more to reclaim the barren deserts of the earth than all the reclamation and irrigation schemes that were ever devised by man. The physical creation has participated in man's ruin because of man's sin, but at the Return of the Lord it shall also participate in the glorious Results of man's redemption.

(2) In the second place, *As the Final Outcome of Christ's Coming again, heaven and earth shall be purged by fire and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, free from all imperfections of every kind.* This we are told in 2 Pet. 3: 10-13:

> "But *the day of the Lord* will come as a thief; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But, according to His promise, *we look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*"

The burning up here referred to apparently is not so much for judgment as for cleansing and refining and reforming and purifying and glorifying. It is not so much something to dread as something we should "eagerly desire" and "look for."

The thought of the coming new and incomparably better heaven and earth is found also in Rev. 21: 1:

> "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more."

In Rev. 21: 1-27 we have a marvelous picture of the coming new heaven and new earth. Read the entire passage for yourself.

To sum up all the strange and wonderful and inconceivably glorious results of the Return of our Lord Jesus from heaven, where He now is, to this earth, where we now are and where He once was:

AS THE RESULT OF THE COMING BACK TO THIS EARTH OF JESUS, THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE, THE ONLY TRUE CHRIST, THERE WILL BE A NEW AND GLORIOUS MAN, CLOTHED UPON WITH A NEW AND GLORIOUS BODY, LIVING IN A NEW AND GLORIOUS HUMAN SOCIETY, IN A REDEEMED AND NEW AND GLORIOUS PHYSICAL UNIVERSE.

The loftiest dreams of poets and social philosophers will be far more than realized. The glory of that Coming Day no words can express and no human imagination can conceive, and *all that glory depends upon the Return of our Lord Jesus.*

Is it any wonder that the unceasing cry of the individual Christian is, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly"? There are many things that I long for, but nothing else for which I so long as I long for the Coming Back Again of Christ Jesus to this old and sin-cursed earth. I would like to see a great revival, surpassing any revival the world has ever seen, but the greatest of all revivals will be the Coming Back of Jesus from heaven, where He now is, to this earth.

V. THE TIME WHEN JESUS, THE CHRIST OF THE BIBLE, THE ONLY TRUE CHRIST, IS COMING BACK FROM HEAVEN, WHERE HE NOW IS, TO THIS EARTH, WHERE WE NOW ARE AND WHERE HE ONCE WAS.

We come now to the question, *When will Jesus, the Christ of the Bible, the only True Christ, Return from Heaven, where He now is, to this Earth, where we now are and where He once was?* There is more division and controversy on that question than on any other question connected with our Lord's Return. There are many who believe that He is coming again and that He is coming personally and visibly, and that He is coming with great publicity, and that He is coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, but who, when they come to the question, When is He coming, part company from one another. The two main divisions of those who believe in a personal, visible coming of the Lord are known as "Premillenarians" and "Postmillenarians." Those who believe that He is coming before the Millennium, and that the Millennium is the result of His coming, are called "Premillenarians," and those who believe that He is coming after the Millennium are called "Postmillenarians." There is still a third class, who are neither Premillenarians nor Postmillenarians, because they do not believe that there is to be a Millennium. They believe that the words about the "thousand years" are purely figurative. They say, furthermore, that there is but one passage in the Bible that mentions the Millennium at all, and that is in the most figurative book in the Bible, the book of Revelation. Which of

these three classes are right? What does the Bible say on the question of the Time of our Lord's Return? We shall find that it says a great deal, and that what it says is very clear, and as definite as words can make it.

1. The first thing that the Bible teaches in regard to the time of our Lord's return is that, *No man knows, and no man can know, the exact time of our Lord's return.* On that point, the Bible is as clear as language can make it, and as emphatic as it is clear. Listen to the words of our Lord Jesus Himself in Matt. 24: 36, 42:

> "But of that day and hour *knoweth no one,* not even the angels, *neither the Son,* but the Father only. . . . Watch therefore: for *ye know not* on what day your Lord cometh."

These words of our Lord are as clear and emphatic as are His words in which He declared that He was coming back, and coming back personally. It is impossible for any one to attempt to set dates for the coming of Jesus Christ and remain submissive in his mind to the authority of Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus Christ Himself, *as a Man,* refused to attempt to penetrate this question that the Father had set within His own authority, thus setting an example for us; and for any one of us to attempt to do what the Lord Jesus Christ (*as a Man*) would not do, is the most daring and wicked presumption. When any man says to me any year, as has been said to me in two or three different years, "I am very sure the Lord Jesus is coming for His church at Easter," or, as some have said, "at Pentecost," or, "at the Feast of Trum-

pets," I feel like saying to him, and I would be perfectly warranted in saying to him, "How dare you, sir? How dare you seek to penetrate the mystery that the Lord Jesus (as a Man), solemnly setting us an example to follow in His steps, did not venture to penetrate?"

But let me read you another utterance of our Lord Jesus Christ equally explicit, Acts 1:6, 7:

> "They, therefore, when they were come together, asked Him saying, Lord, dost thou *at this time* restore the kingdom to Israel? And He said unto them, *It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority.*"

In these words, the meaning of which, when taken in their connection, is as plain as day, our Lord Jesus absolutely forbade even His inspired apostles, and much more us, to seek to penetrate the domain of dates in connection with His coming and His kingdom, saying that these belonged to the exclusive authority of God the Father, that God the Father "hath set" them *"within His own authority."* In the face of this plain and solemn declaration of our Lord, for any one to dare to set a date, even tentatively, for the coming of Christ or for the rapture of the church, or for "the end of the Times of the Gentiles," or for anything of that kind, is to commit an act of rank and gross disobedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. There is only one phrase that can adequately describe such conduct, and that phrase is "presumptuous wickedness." A dearly beloved friend of mine once attempted to do this, and brought his manuscript to me for criticism. On read-

ing his manuscript I pointed out to him this verse, Acts 1:7, and pled with him not to publish his manuscript. He asked me, "Cannot the verse be interpreted in this way: 'It is not for you to know *the* times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority,' but you can know other times and seasons which the Father hath not set within His own authority, and the time of our Lord's return and the rapture of the church may be one of these times or seasons which the Father hath not set within His own authority?" I told him, what is unquestionably true, that this was not only not a good, honest, straightforward interpretation but an evasion, but that, furthermore, *the interpretation* was *absolutely impossible when we consider the Greek text.* In the Greek text (as also in the Revised Version), there is no *"the"* before "times or seasons," so that while this interpretation might be a possible one, though not a likely one, of the Authorized Version, it is an absolutely impossible interpretation of the Greek text. The attempt to explain away Acts 1:7 is as disloyal to Jesus Christ as an attempt to explain away Jno. 14:1, 2 or 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. All this date-setting business is not merely foolish, it is wicked, it is grossly wicked, it is showing contempt for our Lord Jesus Christ. Any one who attempts to set a date for our Lord's return is by that fact discredited as a teacher of the Word.

The setting of dates is usually attempted on the ground of calculations from the data given in the book of Daniel, but the data given in the book of Daniel were not intended to in any wise help us to fix the exact date of our Lord's return. Bible statements of

dates have to do with God's dealings with the Jews; and, therefore, the time in which the Jew is set aside and God deals with the Gentiles is an indefinite and indeterminate interval. Any calculations, therefore, built upon the data in the book of Daniel are utterly unreliable, because there we have fixed years, plus other fixed years, *plus an unknown quantity,* and, therefore, all the attempts to set a time are attempts at the impossible. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that *the statements of time made in the book of Daniel were never intended of God to give us any clew whatever to the exact date of our Lord's return.*

Furthermore, the prophecies in the book of Daniel were extant in the day when our Lord Jesus uttered the words quoted from Matt. 24: 36, "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels, neither the Son, but the Father only." If even the Lord Jesus Himself could not, or would not, determine the date from the data in Daniel, we certainly ought not to expect or try to. Our Lord certainly understood the lessons the prophecies of Daniel were intended to teach, but He distinctly declares that *as a Man,* setting us an example that we should humbly follow in His steps, He voluntarily put aside the knowledge of the date of His return, so that He Himself (as a Man) did not know the day nor the hour of His return. Any one who attempts from the data in Daniel, or from anything else in the Bible, to set a date for the return of our Lord Jesus is guilty of the daring presumption of setting himself above the Lord Jesus and attempting to do what the Lord Jesus Himself in the most solemn and the sternest terms has forbidden us

to do: in awful presumption he is trying to find out things that the Lord Jesus tells us *"the Father hath set within His own authority,"* and with which, therefore, we must not meddle.

Furthermore, it is a part of God's purpose and method in dealing with men to keep them in uncertainty on this matter of the time of our Lord's return, in order that we may keep ourselves in readiness for His return at all times. If the date had been revealed in Bible times, no one who understood the Bible could be watching and waiting for the Lord's return until to-day. The mania for setting dates cannot be too strongly rebuked. It has done more to bring the whole precious doctrine of our Lord's coming into disrepute than anything else has. The one who does it is doing the Devil's work.

2. But while the Bible clearly tells us that it is not the will of God that we know the date or try to know the date of our Lord's return, nevertheless the Bible tells us a great deal about the character of the time when our Lord shall return, and about what will precede His return and what will come after it. *The Bible tells us that the return of our Lord to this earth will be at such a time as even His disciples think not. Even the faithful and wise servant will be taken unawares, but he will be found doing his Master's will.* This we are told in Matt. 24: 44-46:

> "Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant,

whom his lord when He cometh shall find so doing."

It is evident from this passage that the time of our Lord's return will not be a time when everybody is expecting His coming, but a time when people are not expecting it. The fact that people in general are not expecting the Lord's coming to-day is no proof that He is not coming to-day; it is rather an indication that He may come to-day, for it is at just such an hour as this that "the Son of Man cometh."

3. In the third place, *The Lord Jesus will come again in a time when the world is absorbed in its usual occupations.* This is evident from Luke 17: 26-30:

> "And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. *They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.* Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; *they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;* but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all: *after the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed.*"

From these words of our Lord Jesus it is perfectly clear that the time of His coming will be *in a day when the world is absorbed in its usual occupations,* and that it will not be a time when men are expecting Him to come, when they are gathered in white robes on hilltops awaiting His appearing; *everything will be*

going on just as usual when the Son of Man shall be revealed. Stores will be in full operation, streets will be crowded with people, theaters and other places of amusement will be full, worldlings will be card-playing, dancing, carousing, and doing all manner of foolish, worldly and selfish things, business will be going on just as usual, and without a moment's warning the Lord will appear. It will be exactly such a time as the present time, exactly such a day as to-day.

4. In the fourth place, *The time of our Lord's return will be a time of apostasy, a time when men are giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, i.e., a time of multiplying cults and of great inroads of the occult, grievous times, a time of the triumphing of errors and isms, and true faith will be hard to find.* This is plain from 1 Tim. 4: 1, 2:

> "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men, that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron."

The "doctrines of demons" in this passage refer to doctrines taught by demons. It has a clear reference to the "occult," to Spiritualism and similar cults.

We see, also, the character of the times of our Lord's return similarly depicted in 2 Tim. 3: 1-5:

> "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, *lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents,* unthankful, unholy, *without natural affection, implacable,* slanderers, without

self-control, *fierce,* no lovers of good, *traitors,* headstrong, *puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof:* from these also turn away."

In this passage, as well as in the preceding passage that we read, there is a most vivid and accurately characteristic picture of our own day, as would clearly appear if we should take up the passages in detail, for we certainly live in a day in which men are "lovers of money" as in almost no other day in the world's history. We live in a day when both rich and poor are money-mad. We live in a day of most extraordinary boastfulness; the boastfulness of the day has invaded not only our business and our politics, but the domain of philosophy and science. Never was there a day in which "railers" were more in evidence or more audacious. "Disobedience to parents" is a characteristic everywhere of home life. General society is becoming appallingly "without natural affection," seen in the appalling increase of divorce and in the parents' disregard for the highest interests of their children. Never was there a day of the utmost savagery, when men were so fierce, as all nations showed themselves in the late war. It is a day when it is startlingly true, that men and women are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (the craze for amusements has reached an extraordinary pitch), and on every hand we see people "holding a form of godliness but having denied the power thereof," there is such a multiplicity of religions as never before in the history of the world, and yet most of these religions are without

the real power of God in them, mere form. People have gone wildly enthusiastic over the number of people that are following in these days some religion, but religion itself is not necessarily a good thing, it depends upon the character of the religion; "a form of godliness" without "the power thereof" is worse than no religion at all.

Our Lord sets forth again the fact that the time of His return will be in a time of apostasy in Luke 18:8:

> "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

The clear implication of this passage is that at the time when the Son of Man comes back again it will be a time when true faith is hard to find.

From all these passages it is evident that the time of the return of the Lord Jesus from heaven to earth will be a time of apostasy, a time when men are giving heed to "seducing spirits" and "doctrines of demons," i.e., to false doctrines and to various forms of occultism, such as Spiritualism and Theosophy, "grievous times," when true faith will be difficult to find. It will not be a time of universal righteousness, it will not be a millennial time; it will be anything but that. The words of Paul in 1 Tim. 4:1, that the later times will be times when some shall "give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons," indicate a time when men will be so anxious to be taught by unseen, spiritual beings that they will not be careful to distinguish between the Holy Spirit and other spirits, and so will surrender themselves to be controlled by and taught by "demons." This is an actual and very marked characteristic of our times, and this characteristic of

our times has increased enormously since the outbreak of the war, when the pursuit of the occult seems to have become the absorbing passion of the hour with many, both in the church and out of it. As we have said, we have one manifestation of this in "Spiritualism," another in "Theosophy," and still another in some forms of the Tongues Movement. Spiritualism and some forms of the Tongues Movement are closely allied, as could be shown by acts of which I personally know, if there were time to go into it. 2 Tim. 3:1-5 gives, as has been indicated, a remarkably accurate and detailed picture of our own times, and from that fact many conclude that the Lord must be necessarily coming very soon, but that does not necessarily follow. In times now long gone by, earnest men of God, intelligent students of the Bible, have often thought, because of the similarity in some respects of their own days to the times described in the Bible, that the coming of the Lord was very near. Martin Luther, for example, so thought in his own day, and the words which we have read were characteristic of his day, though they were not so characteristic of his day as they are of our own day. These men of the past, who thought that the coming of the Lord was very near were not mistaken, for it was near. The ones who were mistaken were the ones who thought that it was so far away that they let it have no effect on their own lives. Nevertheless, the fact that they felt so deeply that the coming of our Lord was near should make us cautious about asserting dogmatically that the Lord will come this year or next year or even in the days of any of us who are now living; He may,

but we must not say "He will." But certainly these passages, which so clearly and wonderfully depict our own time, should make us thoughtful and watchful.

The multiplying iniquities of our day, the apostasy of so many professing Christians and even ministers and professors of Theology, into the most daring and damning forms of unbelief, even going so far as to deny the Virgin Birth of our Lord and the Resurrection of His Body from the Dead and the final and absolute authority of the Scriptures, and also the lawlessness of the great corporations on the one hand and of the oppressed laboring classes on the other hand, the appalling outbreak of the war spirit in every land, in spite of all the schemes of politicians and statesmen and the monied interests to curb it, all these things are signs that the age is fast approaching its end, and therefore a sign that His coming may be very near at hand. Men's hearts are "fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world" (Luke 21 : 26). The greatest statesmen of our own land, and of all other lands, have the most anxious forebodings as to what the future, and the very near future, will bring forth. *All this would indicate the very near appearing of our Lord;* and He Himself has told us that when we see "these things begin to come to pass" we are to "look up and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh." *But even this does not warrant us in asserting positively that our Lord will come this year or next year or even in a few years;* for there have been times of apostasy in the past, indeed there have been times of more widespread and more thoroughgoing apostasy than in the

present day, and there have also been times in the past when men's hearts have been "fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which were coming on the world." If godly men in those days had predicted positively that our Lord would come within a certain fixed time, or even within a hundred years, they would have been wrong, and would have brought dishonor upon the truth. Nevertheless, as the days grow so rapidly darker, it is right that our hearts should grow more expectant and more hopeful with the assurance that the Lord is at the door.

5. In the fifth place, *The Bible solemnly commands us to be always looking and ready for the Lord's return. Therefore, the return of our Lord to this earth must be an event that, so far as we know, may occur at any moment.* Read, for example, Mark 13:34-36:

> "It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping."

Read, also, Luke 12:35, 36:

> "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and be *ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord,* when he shall return from the marriage feast; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may straightway open unto him."

And read, also, our Lord's words in Matt. 25:13:

> "Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour."

In these passages we are commanded to be "watching," "looking," "waiting" and "ready." It is impossible to be watching or looking for an event that we know cannot occur for one thousand years or for seven years or for any set number of years. It is true that there were individual believers, as, for example, Peter, and also Paul in the latter part of his life, to whom the Lord made it clear that they should pass away before He came, but this was individual dealing with individual men. As far as the body of believers as a whole were concerned, they were told that they were to be watching, looking and ready for His coming. Therefore, as far as they were concerned, as far as you and I are concerned, the return of our Lord Jesus is an event that may occur at any time.

These various passages are all as plain as day, and show clearly that we are always to be watching, looking and ready for the Lord's return, and therefore His return may be an event that, *as far as we know,* may occur at any moment.

No event is predicted in Scripture, and no series of events, that must occur before Jesus comes in the air to receive His own unto Himself. There are things predicted that must occur before He comes to the earth with His saints, but He may come for us, as far as we know, at any moment; and it stands us in hand to be always ready, for "in an hour that ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

The question will arise at this point, What about 2 Thess. 2:2-4:

"To the end that ye be not quickly shaken from

> your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just as hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God."

Here we are told that the great apostasy and the outward manifestation of the Man of Sin must occur before "the day of the Lord" comes, and some one might ask, "How, then, can our Lord come until the Man of Sin is clearly revealed?" The answer to this seeming difficulty is very simple, and it is this—"the day of the Lord" is not the time of the Lord's coming in the air to receive His church to Himself. "The day of the Lord" is the time of the Lord's coming to the earth with His saints to execute judgment on the earth, and that is preceded by the coming of the Lord to receive the Bride, His Church, to Himself (1 Thess. 4: 15-17). There is nothing to show that a considerable interval may not occur between the coming of Christ in the air for His saints and His coming with His saints to the earth, and in that interval "the Man of Sin" will be revealed. Indeed, there are clear indications that there must be an interval. First of all, Christ has much to do with the church in the air before He comes with the church to the earth; and, furthermore, as we have seen, it is clearly taught that the church is to be caught away out of the world before "The Great Tribulation," which accompanies the

manifestation of "the Man of Sin." In addition to all this, we are taught in this very chapter, in the immediate connection with the verses that we are considering, that "the lawless one" cannot be revealed until the restraining power "be taken out of the way." What is this restraining power? We are not distinctly told in the passage what it is, though we are told that the Thessalonians knew what it was. The restraining power must either be the church or the Holy Spirit; therefore, "the Man of Sin" cannot be revealed until the church is taken from the earth, or until the Holy Spirit is taken away from the earth; *but our Lord Jesus Himself tells us that the Holy Spirit will not be taken away from the earth until the church is taken away.* You will find His words in Jno. 14: 15, 16:

> "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, *that He may be with you for ever.*"

As the Spirit is to be with the church *"forever,"* the Spirit cannot be taken out of the world until the church is taken out of the world.

Besides all this, the revealing of "the Man of Sin" is in connection with "The Great Tribulation," and "The Great Tribulation," as any one will see who studies it carefully and thoroughly, is distinctly Jewish, and has to do with the period after the removal of the church from the earth. The thought that some are advancing that God has already withdrawn His Spirit from the church has absolutely no basis whatever in Scripture, but, on the contrary, is contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture. The Lord Jesus has

distinctly told us that God will never withdraw His Spirit from the church, and the Spirit will be here until the church is taken up. He says, as already quoted, in Jno. 14: 16, 17:

> "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know him; for *He abideth with you, and shall be in you.*"

It is perfectly clear then from all that has been said that there is no event that has been revealed to us that must take place before the Lord comes for His church, and that, as far as we know, He may come any day or at any moment, and He must come before "the Man of Sin" is revealed and "The Great Tribulation" breaks.

Jesus Christ may come for His church to-day. I do not say that He will come to-day. I do not say that He will come this year or next or next or next. I hope to live until He comes; yes, I even expect to live until He comes, but I may not. I may be gone from this world years before He comes, but He *may* come to-day. The present times, as those who carefully study them and also carefully study their Bible know, bear a close resemblance to the times of the return of the Lord Jesus as pictured in the Bible, and I confess that as the days grow darker, my heart grows lighter, for Jesus Himself says in Luke 21: 25-28:

> "And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth *distress of nations,* in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the bil-

lows; *men fainting for fear,* and *for expectation of the things which are coming on the world:* for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. *And then* shall they *see the Son of man coming* in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, LOOK UP, and lift up your heads; because YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH."

As the days grow darker, the Golden Age draws nearer, the age to be ushered in by the Return of our Lord. Before the sun sets to-night, there may resound through the world the voice of the archangel and the trump of God and the Lord Himself may descend from heaven and we be caught up with our loved ones who have fallen asleep, to meet Him in the air, and so ever be with Him. If we are so caught up, woe be, for a little space, to those who are left behind. The appalling atrocities of the Kaiser and his hordes in Belgium, in the most awful days of the last war, will be nothing to what shall come upon this earth when the Devil's own Kaiser takes the reins of government. ARE YOU READY FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD JESUS? Make no mistake, refuse to be deceived, find out to a certainty. If you are ready, then, if He comes to-day, up through the roof to unutterable glory; if not ready, woe, woe, woe for you, such as this world has never seen nor suffered before.

"BE YE ALSO READY; FOR IN AN HOUR THAT YE THINK NOT THE SON OF MAN COMETH" (Matt. 24:44).

THE END

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